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BOSTON UNIVERSITY  
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Thesis

A COMPARISON OF JEREMIAH WITH JESUS

by

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(A.B., Nebraska Wesleyan University, 1932)

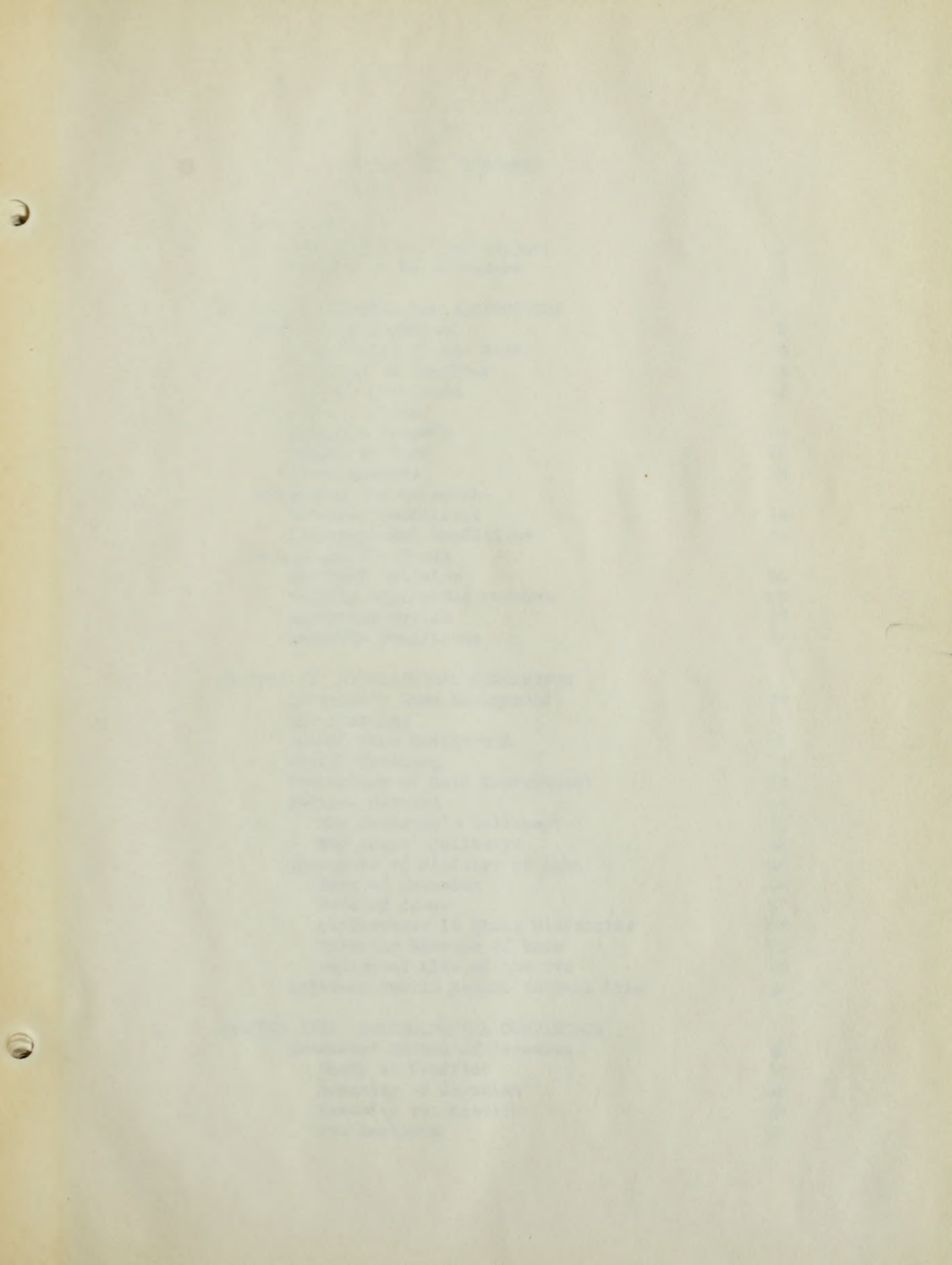
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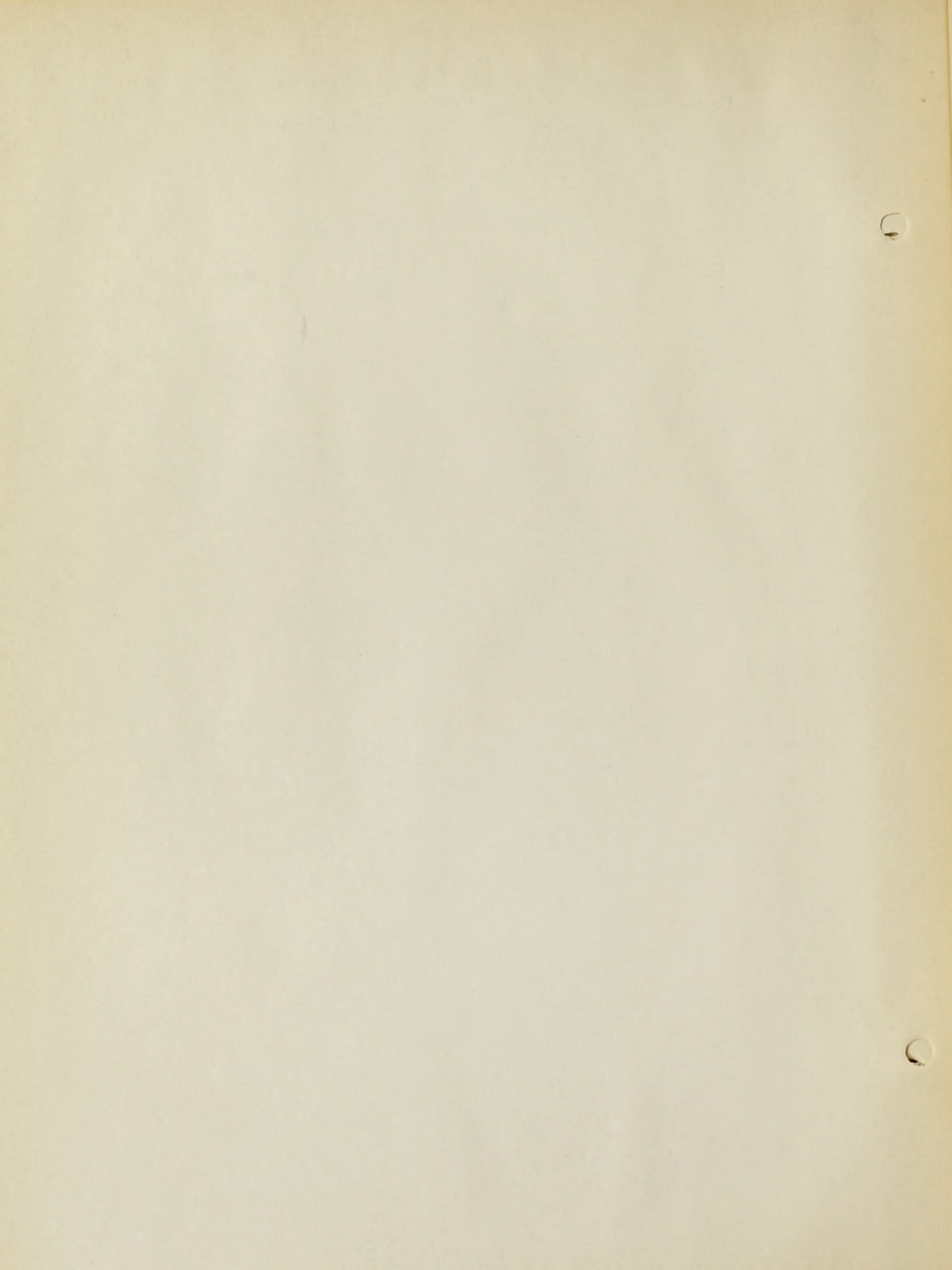


INTRODUCTION

The first part of the book is devoted to a general survey of the history of the subject. It begins with a brief account of the early attempts to explain the phenomena of light, and then proceeds to a more detailed consideration of the various theories which have been advanced from time to time. The second part of the book is devoted to a more detailed consideration of the various theories which have been advanced from time to time. The third part of the book is devoted to a more detailed consideration of the various theories which have been advanced from time to time.

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## INTRODUCTION

Now when Jesus came into the parts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Who do men say that the Son of man is?

And they said, Some say John the Baptist; som, Elijah; and others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets.

He saith unto them, But who say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

(Matt. 16.13-16)

In this passage we have the suggestion of a most interesting question. It would have been natural for the people to have thought that Jesus was perhaps John the Baptist come back, for his preaching of the imminence of the Kingdom of God was much like that of his immediate predecessor. It was natural for some to think he might be Elijah, for there was a belief that Elijah would come as a forerunner of the Messiah.<sup>1</sup> But why should they have thought that he might be Jeremiah? There was no prophecy regarding his return.

It must have been that the people saw a likeness between Jesus and their great prophet. It is rather strange that with all the work that has been done in study of Jeremiah and study of Jesus, very little has been done in the study of the comparison of the two beyond occasional references in works on Jeremiah,

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<sup>1</sup>Matthew 17.10





especially in the conclusions. The most extensive treatment of this subject I have found is the concluding chapter of T.C. Gordon's The Rebel Prophet.

Some points in the life of Jesus are most understandable when seen in the light of corresponding events in that of Jeremiah. Moreover, it is instructive to compare the lives of these two and their teachings. Through such a comparison we are more able to see Jesus' place in the line of the prophets, and are brought to a new appreciation of Jeremiah's greatness.

In the following pages this comparison will be worked out on the basis of the life and work of Jeremiah in particular, with the life of Jesus and his work brought into comparison with it. Obviously, this is no complete biography of either, for the points are selected that are most comparable. On the other hand, it is not an attempt to hide incomparable points.

After a brief consideration of the sources for each life and the historical background in which each worked, the comparison will follow these principal headings: Biographical Comparison, Psychological Comparison, Comparison of Essential Attitudes and Teachings, and An Attempted Relative Evaluation of the Two.

We are in the presence of prodigious spirits when we live with Jeremiah and Jesus. One can hardly come away from a study of either, especially of the two together, without the feeling that he has somehow been walking upon holy ground, that he has caught a glimpse of God Himself.





## CHAPTER I

### SOURCES AND BACKGROUNDS

#### Sources for Jeremiah

Our one primary source for the study of Jeremiah is the Book of the Old Testament that bears his name. It is quoted in II Chronicles 36.21 and 22, and once in Ezra 1.1, the latter being a repetition of II Chronicles 36.22. There are echoes of it in Daniel 9.2 and in Ecclesiasticus 49.6-7. "Second Maccabees, Ch. II. 1-8, contains, besides echoes of our Book of Jeremiah, references to other activities of the Prophet of which the sources and the value are unknown to us. But all these references, as well as the series of apocryphal and apocalyptic works to which the name either of Jeremiah himself or of Baruch, his scribe, has been attached, only reveal the length of the shadow which the Prophet's figure cast down the ages, and contribute no verifiable facts to our knowledge of his career or of his spiritual experience."<sup>1</sup>

Going to the one important source, we find difficulties at once. To the casual, even the careful, reader who tries to form a total impression through a continuous reading of the book from beginning to end there comes much confusion in the very material

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<sup>1</sup>Smith, G.A., Jeremiah, 8-9.



that leaves a powerful picture of the prophet. The book is not arranged in chronological order; part is autobiographical, part is prophetic, part is biographical, part is historical. Withal, there is evidence of numerous hands in its writing.

The book itself gives some information as to its composition: "And it came to pass in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, that this word came unto Jeremiah from Jehovah, saying, Take thee a roll of a book, and write therein all the words that I have spoken unto thee against Israel, and against Judah, and against all the nations, from the day I spake unto thee, from the days of Josiah, even unto this day....Then Jeremiah called Baruch the son of Neriah; and Baruch wrote from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of Jehovah, which he had spoken unto him, upon a roll of a book."<sup>1</sup> But of this original roll we have no further trace. It was completed in the next year, 604 B.C., and read by Baruch in the Temple,<sup>2</sup> where it made such an impression that it was ordered read in the presence of Jehoiakim, who methodically cut the roll into pieces and burned it in the brazier before him. Jeremiah and Baruch then undertook to replace the lost roll, the prophet again dictating to the scribe, who wrote "all the words of the book which Jehoiakim king of Judah had burned in the fire; and there were added besides unto them many like words."<sup>3</sup>

We have in substance this second roll, though it has undergone redactions. As might be supposed from the fact that it is

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<sup>1</sup>Jeremiah 36.1-2,4.

<sup>3</sup>Jeremiah 36.32.

<sup>2</sup>Jeremiah 36.10. The whole story is contained in chapter 36.





a collection of the prophecies of some twenty-one years of ministry, recalled from memory or notes at the most, the prophecies are more general in character and expression than those of later parts of the book. Other sections have come in various ways: through the biographical writing of Baruch, the possible reporting of other disciples,<sup>1</sup> the collection of scattered groups of prophetic utterances of Jeremiah by different authors and their incorporation into the book,<sup>2</sup> the additions of scribes and translators. Since there was no conception of "copyright privileges," it is well-nigh impossible to distinguish certainly between some of the work of the prophet and the additions of editors with special interests.

Before investigating the authenticity of certain passages, we may well note a brief outline of the book<sup>3</sup>:

Introduction: Jeremiah's call and commission (1.1-19)

I. Prophecies concerning Judah and Jerusalem (2.1-35.19)

1. Sins and punishment of Judah (2.1-6.30)
2. Divine judgment upon hypocrisy (7.1-10.25)
3. Disobedience the cause of the nation's downfall (11.1-12.17)
4. The irrevocable curse (13.1-17.27)
5. Lessons from the potter (18.1-20.18)
6. Collection of miscellaneous prophecies and biographical notes (21.1-29.32)
7. Promises of restoration (30.1-33.26)
8. Doom of Jerusalem due to the people's faithlessness (34.1-35.19)

II. Collection of Biographical Narratives (36.1-45.5)

1. Origin of the roll of Jeremiah's prophecies (36.1-32)
2. Jeremiah's experiences during the siege of Jerusalem (37.1-38.29a)
3. Jeremiah and Gedaliah (38.38b-41.18)

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<sup>1</sup>So Gray, in A Critical Introduction to the Old Testament, 197.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 191.

<sup>3</sup>Condensed from Eiselen, Prophetic Books of the Old Testament, 252-254.

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4. Jeremiah with the Jewish fugitives in Egypt (42.1-44.30)
5. Encouragement of the despondent Baruch (45.1-5)

### III. Prophecies against Foreign Nations (46.1-51.64)

1. Egypt (46.1-28)
2. Philistia (47.1-7)
3. Moab (48.1-47)
4. Ammon (49.1-6)
5. Edom (49.7-22)
6. Damascus (49.23-27)
7. Kedar and Hazor (49.28-33)
8. Elam (49.34-39)
9. Babylon (50.1-51.64)

### IV. Appendix: Closing days of Jeremiah and release of Jehoiachin (52.1-34)

There are two principal versions of the Book of Jeremiah extant, the Hebrew or Massoretic version and the Septuagint Greek version. These two are composed of essentially the same material, but their differences are sufficient to indicate that they come from two different Hebrew texts, the Greek being the versions of the Book translation, of course, of an earlier Hebrew manuscript.

The most notable differences are the fact that the prophecies against foreign nations occur in the LXX immediately after the prophecies concerning Judah, together with 25.15-36, while the narrative section is left to the last. Other transpositions are less important, such as the change in the order of the prophecies against foreign nations within that section and changes in wording. The LXX omits about 2700 words contained in the Hebrew text, adding only about 100 of its own. Many of these omissions are simply a word or two, as the omission of "the prophet" after the name of Jeremiah. Others, however, are more important, such as the omission of the latter

4. In addition, the following are included in the list of species of the genus *Phyllanthus* (L.) (1817-1818).

1. *Phyllanthus* (L.) *Phyllanthus* (L.) (1817-1818).

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11. *Phyllanthus* (L.) *Phyllanthus* (L.) (1817-1818).

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12. *Phyllanthus* (L.) *Phyllanthus* (L.) (1817-1818).

13. *Phyllanthus* (L.) *Phyllanthus* (L.) (1817-1818).

14. *Phyllanthus* (L.) *Phyllanthus* (L.) (1817-1818).

15. *Phyllanthus* (L.) *Phyllanthus* (L.) (1817-1818).

half of chapter 32, which sponsors the claims of the priests.

Neither version can be said to be superior point for point, but on the whole the LXX is superior to the Hebrew.<sup>1</sup>

Driver<sup>2</sup> distinguishes "at least five distinct stages" in the development of the Book of Jeremiah. The first is the first writing of the roll of the prophecies by Baruch. The second is the enlarged roll of 604 B.C. The third stage is the narrative material and the prophecies for the next seventeen years down to the exile in 586 B.C. The fourth stage includes the narration of events after 586; to what stages the biographical narratives such as ch. 26, 35, 36, 45, etc., are to be referred is uncertain. The fifth stage would cover a longer period, including such additions as 10.1-16, 50.1-51.58, chapter 52, which is an extract from II Kings, etc., as well as various insertions, glosses, and other changes traceable to various redactions. It is quite possible that there are other stages in addition to these.

It is obvious that Jeremiah cannot be regarded as the author of the book bearing his name. It is impossible to say with certainty that any part is purely from Jeremiah or absolutely authentic as expressing his attitude. At best, we can catch the spirit of the prophet from the better attested portions and use this as a measuring-stick for the rest.

In the criticism of the Book, Duhm brought forth a theory with which all later critics have had to reckon, though the

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<sup>1</sup>For this view: Driver, Literature of the Old Testament, 270; McFadyen, Introduction to the O.T., 156; Gordon, The Rebel Prophet, 41.

<sup>2</sup>Driver, Lit. of the O.T., 271.



Bill of Congress No. 10, which contains the plan of the proposed  
amendment, is now in the hands of the Senate, and will be  
presented to the Senate in the near future.

During the session of the House of Representatives, the  
amendment was passed by a vote of 219 to 191. The House  
will now pass the amendment, and it will then be  
presented to the Senate. The Senate will then  
pass the amendment, and it will then be  
presented to the President.

The President will then sign the amendment, and it  
will become law. The amendment will then be  
presented to the States, and they will  
ratify it. The amendment will then be  
presented to the States, and they will  
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presented to the States, and they will  
ratify it.



others generally disagree with him. He held that only those prophecies which fell into the Qinah meter (a line of three beats followed by a line of two beats) could be credited to Jeremiah.<sup>1</sup>

Textual  
Criticism With the one exception of the letter in chapter 29, he insisted that all Jeremiah's prophecies were in poetry, and limited his work to 268 verses in the Qinah couplets. There are 220 verses he assigned to Baruch, and the remaining 850 or so he left to later supplementers. Cornill and Giesebrecht, while holding that Duhm's theory greatly exaggerated the situation, nevertheless attempted to reduce Jeremiah's poetry to meter.<sup>2</sup> Later writers have been more liberal in their estimates of the authenticity of the prophecies. For instance, Peake<sup>3</sup> says that before Duhm the only sections generally rejected were 10.1-16; 17.19-27; 50-52. Driver<sup>4</sup>, writing at about the same time, listed as the sections then generally rejected 10.1-16; 39.4-13; 50-51; 17.19-27; 33.17-26.

The authenticity of certain passages will have a distinct bearing upon the conclusions possible in this study. Without going into detail here as to the contents of these sections, let us note a particularly important group of passages known as the "confessions of Jeremiah," since they reveal much of his inner life. These include 11.18-23; 12.1-3, 5-6; 15.10-18; 15.19-21; 17.9-10; 17.14-18; 18.18-23; 20.7-12; 20.14-18. Peake<sup>5</sup> accepts these sections

<sup>1</sup>Driver, Lit. of the O.T., 273.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 273-4.

<sup>3</sup>Peake, A.S., Jeremiah, New Century Bible, 63. (Vol. I)

<sup>4</sup>Driver, Op. Cit., 272-3.

<sup>5</sup>Peake, Op. Cit., I, Citations on these sections in Commentary.



as genuine with certain reservations. In 15.10-18 he changes 11-12; he rejects 17.18b, 18.21-23, and questions 20.11-12. These are all passages revealing a vindictive spirit in the prophet, which he feels "accords ill with Jeremiah's deep and tender compassion for his people, and with his claim that he had interceded for them and not desired the woeful day."<sup>1</sup> Streane in the Cambridge Bible, Driver in his Introduction, McFadyen in his Introduction, Sellin in his Introduction, and Skinner in Prophecy and Religion all accept the genuineness of the confessions passages. Skinner says, "There is a tendency among commentators to clear Jeremiah of responsibility for such utterances and assign their composition to later scribes who knew not what spirit he was of. But they are too constant a feature of the Confessions to be got rid of by the hypothesis of interpolation, either on the subjective ground that they are unworthy of Jeremiah, or because they violate some doubtful metrical canon."<sup>2</sup>

Accepting with these scholars the authenticity of the Confessions passages, let us turn our attention briefly to a few other important passages. The first is that of the call of Jeremiah, 1.4-10, which the scholars generally recognize as "from his own lips."<sup>3</sup> Several are certain enough merely to let the passage stand without comment as to its authenticity.<sup>4</sup> A second is 11.1-14, the passage relating to Jeremiah's support of "this Covenant," which most interpret as the Deuteronomic Reform Covenant. There has been more controversy

<sup>1</sup>Peake, Jeremiah, N.C.B., I, 234.

<sup>2</sup>Skinner, John, Prophecy and Religion, 211.

<sup>3</sup>Peake, Op. Cit., I, 5.

<sup>4</sup>So Streane, Jeremiah, Cambridge Bible, xvi, 2.



an opinion that certain responsibilities. In 1940-41 on October 11-12

on October 17, 1941, 18-21-22, and October 23, 11-12. There are all

passages revealing a view that while in the process, while in the

processes till when American's duty and further obligation for the people

and when his claim that he was interested for them and not himself for

would say. The passage in the paragraph 21-22, there is also information

known to the American, which is also information. And there is

in progress and progress all among the governments of the countries

passages. There is a passage about responsibility in

also American of responsibility for when American and when their

responsibility as later passages and there will be seen in the

they are not concerned a feature of the responsibility in the 11-12

by the appearance of information, which is the subjective ground

that may be showing of American, or American may violate some

subjective matter.

passages when there is also the responsibility of the

constitutional passages. For the main and attention there is a few

which important passages. The first is that of the 11-12, American

1-1-12, when the American generally the 11-12, the 11-12, the 11-12,

there are certain things which are for the American and when

concerned as to the responsibility. It seems in 11-12, the passage

relating to American's report of "the Government", which was informed

as the American's before American. There has been some responsibility

passage, American, 11-12, 11-12, 11-12,

11-12, 11-12, 11-12, 11-12, 11-12,

11-12, 11-12, 11-12, 11-12,

11-12, 11-12, 11-12, 11-12,



here. Duhm rejected the passage as unhistorical, but Rothstein, Giesebrecht, and Budde refused to accept his conclusions.<sup>1</sup> Among the later writers consulted above, McFadyen alone questions the passage. The others all accept it as genuine, and as referring, at least in part, to Deuteronomy. More important than these two passages, however, is the great New Covenant passage, 31.31-34. Sellin<sup>2</sup> refers to some controversy over its authenticity, but our modern scholars, and other noted writers on Jeremiah besides those mentioned, generally agree that the passage is from Jeremiah. There is one more passage that is generally rejected, 33.14-26, which contains the promise to the Levitical priests. It is generally declared too contrary to the tone of Jeremiah's other prophecies with regard to priestly and ritual religion to be anything but the addition of a later writer with a priestly axe to grind.<sup>3</sup>

It is always possible that through these passages errors have crept in so as to make them partly unhistorical, but they are accurate enough to allow us to construct a faithful portrait of Jeremiah.

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<sup>1</sup>Peake, Jeremiah, N.C.B., I, 12.

<sup>2</sup>Sellin, Introduction to the Old Testament, Intro., 151.

<sup>3</sup>Driver, Lit. of O.T., 262; McFadyen, Introduction, 150, etc.

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### Sources for Jesus

The sources for the life and teachings of Jesus are more varied than those for Jeremiah, in some respects more complicated, but in others simpler. The material is distributed through several books and through scattered references in others. None of it, so far as we know, was written during the lifetime of Jesus, as was much of the material in Jeremiah during his. Accordingly, we can seldom be certain of exactitude. On the other hand, through combination of the various points of view represented in the writings we possess, we can find accurate character glimpses and representative portions of his teaching.

Our principal sources are the Four Canonical Gospels. The first three, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, are known as the Synoptic Gospels, since a combination of the three produces a unified picture of Jesus, and they agree remarkably with one another. Because of this Synoptic Gospels likeness, as well as certain unlikenesses, and the uncertainty of authorship, sources, and dates, a large body of literature has grown up around the "synoptic problem." It is unnecessary to give a critical discussion of the problem here. Our one question is: "Do these Gospels, and the other sources, give an accurate picture of Jesus?" Accordingly, we must note briefly their claims to authority.

The chief claim of any biography must be first-hand

The course for the life and thought of the man who  
 was called upon to be a teacher, in some respects more important than  
 his own life. The material is distributed among several  
 books and papers, including references to the "Lives of the  
 great men" and other sources. The material is divided into three  
 parts: the first part, which is the most important, is the  
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evidence. In the case of Jesus, who left no writings, eye-witness testimony is most valuable. It is generally agreed, even by scholars representing different points of view,<sup>1</sup> that Mark is the earliest of the three Synoptics. From Papias<sup>2</sup> we have the authority of "the Presbyter" for the statement that Mark gained his information from Peter. This lends eye-witness authority to Mark, who was never associated with Jesus himself, though we cannot claim Peter as the exclusive source for Mark. The sources of the other two Synoptics are not quite so simple. Holtzmann<sup>3</sup> is sure that Matthew and Luke both used Mark, which would lend a measure of Mark's authority to them. Other writers are not so certain that this is true, though a preponderance of opinion favors Holtzmann's view. It is now generally denied that the Apostle Matthew was the author of the Gospel bearing his name. Some have thought that Matthew wrote a Gospel in Aramaic, which was later translated into the Greek. Jülicher, however, is at pains to point out that the Greek of the Gospel is too thoroughly Greek to be a mere translation of a Hebrew or Aramaic text.<sup>4</sup> Schleiermacher brought forth a compromise theory, according to which Matthew wrote a collection of the sayings of Jesus in the Aramaic, which was later used by the author of the Gospel as the chief source for his discourse material.<sup>5</sup> Speaking of the fact that if the desire for an Apostolic name had been the only consideration, Matthew would not have been chosen

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<sup>1</sup>Gilbert, Student's Life of Jesus, 381; Jülicher, Introduction to the New Testament, 308, 326, 337; Holtzmann, Life of Jesus, 21-25ff.

<sup>2</sup>Papias in Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, III, 39, quoted in Gilbert, 373.

<sup>3</sup>Holtzmann, Life of Jesus, 21.

<sup>4</sup>Jülicher, Intro. 303ff.

<sup>5</sup>Jülicher, Intro., 304.



on account of his obscurity, Jülicher says: "All existing facts, including the interest shown by the author in Matthew in 9.9 and 10.3, are best explained on the supposition that peculiar relations existed between this Gospel and Matthew, that the author actually used a collection of Logia made by Matthew as the foundation for his book, and that since he had not his own personal glory so much at heart as the influence of his Gospel, he recommended this latter to his fellow-believers as a Greek version, made according to his ability, of the old Matthew."<sup>1</sup> Thus Matthew also assumes eye-witness authority.

Luke is another problem. He claims only to be a historian, with the authority only of a skilled worker with sources: "Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to draw up a narrative concerning those matters which have been fulfilled among us, even as they delivered them unto us, who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word, it seemed good to me also, having traced the course of all things accurately from the first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus; that thou mightest know the certainty concerning the things wherein thou wast instructed."<sup>2</sup> It has already been mentioned that one of these narratives is generally considered to have been Mark. What the others, of the "many" already in circulation, were we do not know, in spite of the theories of a "proto-Luke" and a "Q source."

The sources of the Gospels are not so important, however, as is their historical value for us. I cannot do better than to quote

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<sup>1</sup>Jülicher, Introduction, 307.

<sup>2</sup>Luke 1.1-4.



on account of his testimony. He is a very interesting man.  
The interest shown by the public in his case is very great.  
The fact remains that the investigation has been very thorough.

Between this point and the next, the investigation has been very thorough.  
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The fact remains that the investigation has been very thorough.

Without further delay,  
Very truly yours,  
J. Edgar Hoover



the words of two scholars on this subject. Gilbert says:

The portraits of Christ, drawn by the first three evangelists, though each one is produced in part by the use of materials not found elsewhere, are essentially one....The fact that these three independent narratives, while differing in a multitude of details, agree in presenting essentially the same portrait of Jesus, is a strong argument for their historical character. Their origin at a time while eye-witnesses were still living, and their acceptance among believers from that early day, are also the best possible evidence of their historical trustworthiness.<sup>1</sup>

He goes on to point out that not all the narratives in these Gospels are of equal value, since there are contradictions within them. It is simply necessary to use some caution in employing these sources. In much the same vein Jülicher writes:

The Synoptic Gospels are of priceless value, not only as books of religious edification, but also as authorities for the history of Jesus. Though much of their data may be uncertain, the impression they leave in the reader's mind of the Bearer of Good Tidings is on the whole a faithful one....The true merit of the Synoptists is that, in spite of all the poetic touches they employ, they did not repaint, but only handed on, the Christ of history....in the Synoptics she [the Church] has handed down to us the best that ever existed under that title, and that the Gospel story was never and nowhere so truly, fully and plainly told as in Mark, Matthew and Luke.<sup>2</sup>

The Fourth Canonical Gospel, John, is variously estimated. Some have held it as the Supreme Gospel, pointing to its superior spirituality as their criterion. Opinion has varied all the way from this to complete rejection as a useful source.

Gospel  
of John

The Fourth Gospel is distinctly different from the

Synoptics in several respects. It makes Jesus proclaim his Messiahship from the first, though in the Synoptics he is shown

<sup>1</sup> Gilbert, Students' Life of Jesus, 380-381.

<sup>2</sup> Jülicher, Introduction, 371, 383)



as refusing to proclaim it openly until the end of his life, though such passages as "All things have been delivered unto me of my Father;" and "no one knoweth the Son, save the Father; neither doth any know the Father, save the Son"<sup>1</sup> may be interpreted to involve all his Messianic claims. John is divergent from the Synoptics in regard to some of the events of Jesus' life, though these differences are usually differences of day, hour, etc.<sup>2</sup>

Its authorship by the Apostle John cannot be definitely established, though the divergences and places where it supplements the other narratives point with some strength to John or some one near him, at least some one with Apostolic authority as the author, for, as Gilbert points out, "A new and divergent narrative could scarcely have received the indorsement of the churches unless it was supported by unquestionable historical acquaintance with the facts and by apostolic authority."<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, it is often hard to distinguish the writer's explanatory material from the discourses of Jesus, so steeped is the whole in the personality of the author. The whole Gospel must be read in the light of the Prologue, though not as an elaborate and mystical attempt to expound a philosophy. John is not so concerned with Jesus' teaching about life and Law, but rather, "Wherever he [Jesus] is not speaking as a prophet in order to reveal his omniscience, or in parables in order to test the understanding of his hearers, he has one constant theme--himself, his relations to the Father, to the world and to those who believe in him,

<sup>1</sup>Matt. 11.27.

<sup>2</sup>Mark 11.1, John 12.1; Matt. 15.25; John 19.14.

<sup>3</sup>Gilbert, Students' Life of Jesus, 388.







and through all this the fulfilment, the completion of the Scriptures. This gives the Gospel a remarkable monotony."<sup>1</sup>

John, generally considered the latest of the Four Canonicals, is the work of one looking back over events and a life whose significance was not wholly understood and trying to put forth an interpretation of them that would be a guide for Christian piety. It shows the marks of idealization of a powerful personality, even as the stories of Elisha's miracles in II Kings attest the power of the prophet's personality in its impression upon the people. At the same time, it furnishes a portrait of Jesus which harmonizes with and supplements that of the Synoptics. Even Holtzmann, who is particularly deprecatory of the Fourth Gospel, and who says of it, "One might very much prefer not to have to use such a free redaction and reconstruction of the traditional materials as a historical source at all,"<sup>2</sup> is obliged to admit that it gives certain valuable information which is necessary to the portraiture of Jesus. We must, however, use this Gospel with caution.

From the Four Gospels together, we are able to construct a fairly complete picture of Jesus' life, though we still have many desirable portions lacking.

There are a few other less important sources that should be mentioned. Holtzmann places the fragmentary Gospel of the Hebrews,

Other Sources      an extra-canonical work, on a level with the Gospel of John in value.<sup>3</sup> In what we have preserved through other

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<sup>1</sup>Jülicher, Introduction, 389.

<sup>2</sup>Holtzmann, Life of Jesus, 45.

<sup>3</sup>Holtzmann, 46.



writers of this Gospel there is much like the Synoptics, with some differences in wording of similar discourses, etc. Since we shall make little use of this Gospel directly, I simply quote Holtzmann's conclusion: "The Gospel of the Hebrews is on the whole similar to our Synoptic Gospels, but at the same time completely independent of them, while yet possessed of an equal value. Luke is the one it most clearly resembles."<sup>1</sup> It contains little beyond what we have in the Synoptics.

The Book of Acts furnishes some material for the period after the Resurrection, which will scarcely concern us, as well as some sayings of Jesus quoted by the Apostles. Similarly, several of the letters of Paul and other New Testament writings, by passing references, give considerable material, much of it confirmatory and some original, with regard to the life of Christ. Gilbert devotes three full pages to an outline of these points, and concludes with this paragraph:

In this mass of specific information, much of it earlier than any one of our canonical Gospels, there is nothing which is at variance with the detailed accounts of the evangelists. There are some notable omissions,--for example, the omission of any reference to the supernatural conception of Jesus; and there are some notable additions, as the appearance of the risen Lord to more than five hundred brethren at once: but still the outline contained in these references, which are drawn from various writers, some of whom were eye-witnesses and some not, is in remarkable agreement with the outline of the Gospels, and offers strong substantiation of their account of the essential facts in the life of Jesus Christ.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Holtzmann, *Jesus*, 51.

<sup>2</sup>Gilbert, *Students' Life of Jesus*, 406.



history of this people there is more than the people, with more  
 difference in working of similar characters, etc. It was my belief  
 with little use of such popular history, I strongly desire Holman's  
 conclusion: "The history of the people is in the words which it  
 has spoken." But of the same kind completely independent of  
 fact, which was necessary of an equal value. There is but one it must  
 be made possible. It is possible little people that we have in the  
 history.

The book of John Holman is most useful for the period  
 after the revolution, which will certainly concern us, as well as  
 now before it. It is divided by the author, Holman, several of  
 the facts of fact and other the historical evidence. In passing  
 reference, this conclusion is reached, most of it confirmed, and  
 some original, also reached by the life of Holman. Holman's history  
 there will be an outline of these people, and concludes with  
 this paragraph:

In this work of Holman's history, much of it  
 earlier than any of the historical people, there is nothing  
 which is as true as the history of the people, and which is  
 found in the history of the people, and which is  
 and reference to the important conclusion of Holman, and there  
 are some points additional, as the appearance of the river  
 to have been the history of the people, but still the history  
 continues in the history of the people, and there is no  
 without some of the same people, and some of it is  
 historical evidence, and the history of the people, and  
 in the life of the people.



In Josephus, the Jewish historian of the first century, there was evidently mention of Jesus and his work which has been lost, for "In a passage, the genuineness of which is not at all open to question (xx. 200), he speaks of the condemnation of 'James, the brother of Jesus, the so-called Christ.'...Now in the passage just cited Josephus assumes that his readers know who Jesus Christ is. He introduces James by calling him the brother of Jesus, the so-called Christ. Therefore he has spoken of Jesus before. Perhaps we might be justified in inferring also from this passage that Josephus was not too severe in his condemnation of the Christian movement."<sup>1</sup>

Tacitus, the Roman historian of the early Second century, in the Annals (xv. 44) "calls Christ the founder of the Christian community; the Messianic title is already taken to be a personal name. According to the historian, this Christ was put to death in the reign of Tiberius by the Procurator Pontius Pilate--a precise note of time of great value."<sup>2</sup> The rest of his reference to Christianity simply shows his abhorrence of it.

The sources for the life of Jesus are thus seen to be more varied and scattered than those for the life of Jeremiah. It will be quite possible, however, to form sufficiently accurate impressions of the two men of God to be able to compare them without resorting to a stretch of the imagination.

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<sup>1</sup>Holtzmann, Life of Jesus, 14.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 13.



## HISTORICAL BACKGROUNDS

In order to have a fair basis for the comparison of these two mighty spirits, it will be necessary to have some understanding of the conditions into which each was born, political, social, and religious. In these backgrounds there is much that is similar, else there would have been few points of comparison between the men and their work; at the same time, there are diverse elements that may have an effect upon their attitudes. At this point I shall simply sketon the conditions, to which I shall have occasion to refer in comparing actions and attitudes.

### Background for Jeremiah

Damascus had fallen in 732 B.C., a prey to Assyria's might; Samaria had met the same fate in 722. The ten tribes of the north were scattered, never to be re-united. Judah was left as the sole united portion of the old kingdom of Israel, with Ahaz on the throne. Two years after the fall of Samaria, Ahaz died. National Conditions Hezekiah ruled until 692, when he was succeeded by his son, Manasseh. Scriptural accounts in II Kings 21 and II Chronicles 33 picture him as an example of total depravity in a ruler. This was principally due to his reactionary movements in religion. Hezekiah had vigorously reformed the religious practices of Judah under the leadership of Isaiah. Manasseh came as the





champion of the opposition, restoring the high places, turning to worship of Baal, necromancy, idolatry, and child sacrifice.<sup>1</sup> It was a time of such violence that the biblical narrative says, "Moreover Manasseh shed innocent blood very much, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to the other."<sup>2</sup>

This reaction was so strong, and violence so fierce, that no prophet spoke out openly against it, unless Micah 6.6-8 on child sacrifice was actually spoken at this period, but there must have been a great deal of activity going on beneath the surface. The prophetic party continually fought the anti-prophetic element on the ground that their cults simply made Israel like other nations, that they were socially unjust and licentious, and that they denied the supremacy of Yahweh. Jeremiah sets forth this injustice in no uncertain terms: "For among my people are found wicked men: they watch, as fowlers lie in wait, they set a trap, they catch men. As a cage is full of birds, so are their houses full of deceit: therefore they are become great, and waxed rich. They are waxed fat, they shine: yea, they overpass in deeds of wickedness; they plead not the cause, the cause of the fatherless, that they may prosper; and the right of the needy do they not judge."<sup>3</sup> Again he says, "For from the least of them even unto the greatest of them every one is given to covetousness; and from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely."<sup>4</sup> Out of all this turmoil came the origins of Deuteronomy.

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<sup>1</sup> II Kings 21.3-9; II Chron. 33.3-9.

<sup>2</sup> II Kgs. 21.16.

<sup>3</sup> Jeremiah 5.26-28.

<sup>4</sup> Jer. 6.13.



It was into this situation that Jeremiah was born about the year 650-645 B.C., shortly before the child-king Josiah began his reign. Down to the death of Josiah we have the interesting picture of the relationship between a prophet and a king, both very close to the same age. "We have no information about the early years of Josiah's reign, but it is evident from the subsequent course of events that the antagonism to the teaching of the school of Isaiah must have greatly moderated. For some nothing occurred to give the necessary impetus to a popular reformation; but about the year 626 news of the havoc which the Scythians were working in the districts north of Palestine, and which menaced Judah itself, caused the prophets to preach repentance."<sup>1</sup> These Scythians were a wild, fierce people whose home was north of the Crimea, but who burst into the more favored southern regions. On the present occasion their invasion passed over Mesopotamia, "finding the land before them like a garden, and leaving it behind them a howling wilderness," sparing neither age nor sex, but finally becoming weaker as it spread itself until when it reached Syria and threatened to visit Egypt its force was largely gone. The Egyptian king Psammetichus, however, bought immunity by rich gifts, and the Scythians returned to the north.<sup>2</sup> Thus they never actually came into Judah, but the panic was real and well-founded.

During the period of the kings preceding Josiah the struggle between Egypt and Assyria had been intermittently waged,

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<sup>1</sup> Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, vii, 447a.)

<sup>2</sup> Driver, Lit. of the O.T., 252-253.





with Judah always the buffer between these two powerful states. Ahaz had appealed to Tiglath-pileser of Assyria for aid against his neighbors and had paid tribute to him in spite of the protest of Isaiah, who also tried to restrain his nation's leaders from entanglements with Assyria and Egypt during Hezekiah's reign. Manasseh was content to remain tributary to Assyria; it was in large measure due to his connection with that nation that some of the foreign cults International Conditions were restored. Assyria was the dominant power. Egypt, however, was bearing the yoke of the east restlessly, seizing every possible opportunity to revolt. Such a revolt was met by the Assyrian monarch, Ashurbanipal, with the destruction of the city of Thebes, but under Psammetichus (663-609 B.C.) the Egyptians grew stronger and again threatened to break the Assyrian power.

With Assyria occupied with Egypt and other western revolts, a new power was rising in the east. Babylon was slowly gathering strength, consolidating smaller states and preparing for the struggle against the ruling power. When Jeremiah began his prophecy, however, it was not Assyria, nor Egypt, nor Babylon which loomed as the great danger, but the Scythians already mentioned. These savage hordes swept in from Asia Minor until they threatened even the sway of Assyria. When Babylon, allowed more time for growth while Assyria was occupied with the western invaders, later assumed the dominant position in the Oriental world, it was easy for Jeremiah





to shift his attention to her with only slight re-coloring of his earlier prophecies concerning the Scythians, so that those who read the prophecies as outright predictions relate all the prophecies to Babylon from the outset.

Through all this interplay of empires Judah remained relatively undisturbed, at least so long as tribute was regularly paid. Tiny and insignificant, she danced blissfully on her tight-rope--and cut it at both ends.

#### Background for Jesus

In the centuries between Jeremiah and Jesus much had happened. Babylon had given place to Persia, Persia to Macedonia under conquering Alexander, and finally the whole Mediterranean world had fallen under the sway of mighty Rome. Where Judah had been tributary to Assyria and for a time a colony of Babylon, she was now a partially self-governing state under the rule of Rome, a rule most irksome to the ever-nationalistic, independence-loving Jews.

Jeremiah had seen the nation broken up and the people scattered in exile. When Babylon fell into the hands of Cyrus, the exiles were allowed to return. In 538 B.C. the return was begun, carried on through the years by Nehemiah and Ezra. In the time of the Maccabees the tiny Judaea was expanded into the Jewish Palestine, embracing territory almost identical in extent with that of the



monarchy under David and Solomon. "But all that the Maccabaeans built up was destroyed by the Romans and by Herod 'the Great,' who, by the help of the Romans, sat on the throne of Judaea."<sup>1</sup> Civil war had come, in which Pompey's legate, Scourus, had intervened, and for thirty years until 37 B.C. the wars continued, until Herod sat on the throne. "These wars, combined with Herod's tyranny and, after his death, the absolute power assumed in Judaea by the Romans, were instrumental in destroying the best powers of the Jewish nation, weakening it as a state, and stirring up both political Messiahs and that conception of a Messiahship 'not of this world,' which played on the popular mental confusion in Judaea and, as we shall see later, also affected the mind of Jesus in the earlier part of his career."<sup>2</sup>

In 63 B.C. Pompey took Jerusalem, including the Temple. In 57 B.C. Judaea was divided into five fragments. Galilee was one of the centers of the civil wars through which Herod gained his throne. In spite of his building of the Temple, his oppression and bloodshed were so great that Klausner says, "Such was the history of the works of Herod 'the Great': bloodshed, confiscation of property, harsh taxation, debauchery and contempt of the law. The loss of the best cultural elements, stern political oppression, deprivation of freedom,

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<sup>1</sup>Klausner, Life of Jesus, 137.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.; I follow Klausner as one of the best qualified authorities on the background conditions for Jesus, though, as a Jew, he is not always sympathetic to the Christian viewpoint.





suspicion, espionage, flattery of the great, increase of want and poverty--these are the marks of Herod's government which lasted close on to the time of the birth of Jesus. Drop by drop Herod had drained the blood of the Jews in the course of his thirty-three years' rule (37-4 B.C.). Scarce a day passed but someone was put to death."<sup>1</sup>

A period of anarchy and bloody revolt was ended for a time by the apportioning of Herod's kingdom to Archelaus, Antipas, and Philip, his sons, with parts going to Syria and princess Salome. By 6 A.D. Palestine had acquired sufficient importance to have a procurator appointed, under whom a sort of autonomy was retained within strict limits. The Sanhedrin held jurisdiction in religious matters, even in capital cases, but all the latter were subject to the final approval of the procurator. Pontius Pilate was the fourth procurator, ruling 26-36 A.D. "The Judaea of his day was marked by 'bribes, vainglorious and insolent conduct, robbery, oppression, humiliations, men often sent to death untried, and incessant and unmitigated cruelty.'"<sup>2</sup>

In the time of Jesus there were several political and religious parties. The Sadducees were mainly of aristocratic priestly families, holding almost a monopoly on the high priest-  
Politico-Religious Parties hood, playing an active part in the Sanhedrin. They were opportunists, intent on keeping their own rights, objecting to popular disorders, notorious for strictness in judgment.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Klausner, Life of Jesus, 148-149.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 163.

<sup>3</sup>Sanday, Outlines of the Life of Christ, 9.





The Pharisees were essentially the religious party. Numbering about 6000, they "gave themselves up entirely to the 'life eternal,' to the explication of the Torah in its minutest detail."<sup>1</sup> There were distinctions within the Pharisaic party, but they were principally concerned with outward observance of the Law.

The Scribes were professed students of the Law, who had to a large extent taken the place of the priests as the teachers of Judaism. "Their chief fields of action were the synagogues and the Rabbinical schools. The most highly respected of the scribes were the great religious authorities of the day."<sup>2</sup>

The Zealots were the action party, prepared to go to any lengths to throw off the burden of oppression. "The ardour of the Zealots recognized no sovereignty of flesh and blood: God alone was king in Israel; and (as is invariably the case with extreme enthusiasts) they found it necessary to add to their zeal a tyranny and violence which only served to augment the prevailing confusion."<sup>3</sup>

The Essenes were an ascetic sect, mystical and given to ethical problems and visions of the future, especially with relation to the Messianic kingdom as a glorious future life where the little would be great and the poor comforted.<sup>4</sup> Some have thought that Jesus was one of the Essenes, though the idea is generally rejected. This party would probably correspond roughly to the Rechabites and the Nazirites of Jeremiah's time, as far as their

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<sup>1</sup> Klausner, Life of Jesus, 171.  
<sup>3</sup> Klausner, 171.

<sup>2</sup> Sanday, Jesus, 10.  
<sup>4</sup> Klausner, 172-3.



position in the nation is concerned.

The synagogues mentioned above were new developments since Jeremiah's time. The Temple at Jerusalem was still the center of the worship, but in nearly all the cities and towns of Palestine, as well as in many of the cities of the world outside Palestine, there were synagogues where the Judaistic worship was regularly carried on. Connected with the Synagogues were the schools where the children learned the Torah. Klausner<sup>1</sup> speaks also of advanced schools or colleges where the students were further instructed in the Torah and where they learned to expound the scriptures to the people. In spite of this, he says, most of the village peasants were ignorant of the Torah. There was also a certain amount of secular learning, though this was not widely taught.

The Jews were still predominantly agricultural, though there were a large number of trades practiced, through which a strong artisan class had sprung up. There was a class of free peasants, "small-holders," who lived by the labor of their own hands. Besides these there was a group of wealthier peasants, middle-class landowners, and a still smaller group of the really wealthy landlords. On the other hand there were many hiring peasants of various classes, free men, who hired out on varying terms.

Besides these there were two classes of slaves. The

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<sup>1</sup> Klausner, Life of Jesus, 194.





Hebrew slaves were hirelings who could not change their masters, not perpetual slaves, and comparatively well-treated, though definitely slaves. The Canaanitish slaves were treated as chattels, marked, bought, and sold as cattle would be handled. They were ill-treated, as compared with the Hebrew slaves, having practically no rights, though some of them acquired special relationships with their masters, such as the slave-girl who was the paramour of Pherora, the brother of Herod. Klausner says of them, "In any case, 'Canaanitish slavery' was then a horrible plague affecting the national body of Israel as was the case with other nations in those early days. Even if the Canaanitish slaves took no part in the subversive political and religious movements in Palestine, by their very existence they unwittingly helped to bring them about."<sup>1</sup>

I close this section with a summary statement of Klausner's:

The degraded political conditions, slavery at home, dispersion abroad, made a breach in the messianic hope (a hope which was essentially nationalistic): the morality which was bound up with it ("the kingdom of heaven" in the sense of the decisive rule of right) acquired, on the one hand, a universalistic tendency, and, on the other, an individualistic tendency--in the direction of the human hope that the individual should, in the world to come, receive a recompense for his good or evil deeds. Such recompense for the nation in this world was an idea which, unconsciously and gradually, became more and more distant, and almost disappeared into the realm of vision and mysticism.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Klausner, Life of Jesus, 184. The discussion of the economic classes and the slaves is based upon this book.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 228.





## CHAPTER II

### BIOGRAPHICAL COMPARISON

Some of the first points of likeness between Jeremiah and Jesus are biographical. Their backgrounds are more similar than might at first be supposed.

Jeremiah was "the son of Hilkiah, of the priests that were in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin,"<sup>1</sup> about 650 B.C. Hilkiah is not to be identified with the Hilkiah who was high priest at Jerusalem during the Deuteronomic Reform.<sup>2</sup> His line, however, was that of the earlier high priest Abiathar, who had been David's

Jeremiah's  
Home  
Background

counsellor<sup>3</sup>, co-high priest with Zadok,<sup>4</sup> and had been ejected by Solomon from the priesthood.<sup>5</sup> Thus he came of a noble lineage and high tradition. In his work we find that he had friends among the nobles. Indeed, we even find them aiding him at different times. When Baruch had read the first roll of Jeremiah's prophecies in the upper court of the temple, the princes sent for him to read it to them before taking it to the king. This having been done, "They turned in fear one toward another, and said unto Baruch, We will surely tell the king of all these words. And they asked Baruch, saying, Tell us now, How didst thou write all these words at his mouth? Then Baruch answered them, He pronounced all these words unto me with his mouth, and I wrote them with ink in

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<sup>1</sup> Jer. 1.1.

<sup>2</sup> Calkins, Driver, and others hold this view.

<sup>3</sup> I Chr. 27.34.

<sup>4</sup> I Chr. 15.11.

<sup>5</sup> I Kgs. 2.26,27.



the book. Then said the princes unto Baruch, God, hide thee, thou and Jeremiah; and let no man know where ye are."<sup>1</sup> At another time, that of Jeremiah's great denunciation of the temple practices, when the priests and other prophets would have put Jeremiah to death, "Then said the princes and all the people unto the priests and to the prophets: This man is not worthy of death; for he hath spoken to us in the name of Jehovah our God...the hand of Ahikam the son of Shaphan was with Jeremiah, that they should not give him into the hand of the people to put him to death."<sup>2</sup> These instances indicate that Jeremiah was of high enough position to command the respect and probably the friendship of the nobility of Judah.

Abiathar had been one of the two leading priests under the rule of David, but when David died, he took the wrong side of the resulting conflict and was returned to his ancestral home at Anathoth, in the tribe of Benjamin, leaving the place of honor to Zadok. Still he maintained a high position. By Jeremiah's time the family still had landed possessions and some substance, for Jeremiah not only had the right but the ability to buy the field of Hanamel, his cousin, at Anathoth.<sup>3</sup> Just what Hilkiash's position was during Manasseh's reign is not certain. It would seem beneath the dignity of priests of such a line to have descended to the mere keeping of a high place. On the other hand, if Hilkiash and his family were adherents of the prophetic party which was determined to concentrate the national worship in Jerusalem, we should hardly expect from his

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<sup>1</sup> Jer. 36.16-19.

<sup>2</sup> Jer. 26.16,24.

<sup>3</sup> Jer. 32.6ff.





own family such active resistance to Jeremiah's espousal of this cause.<sup>1</sup>

Regardless of this disagreement, it is clear that Jeremiah had the best training that Judah had to offer. Even his little town of Anathoth laid an important background for much of his prophecy. "Its 'wild outlook' northward over the 'stony fields of Benjamin' to the mountains of Ephraim, eastward over a foreground of rough barren hills to the Jordan valley and the heights of Gilead beyond, gives the landscape on which his eyes rested day by day during the impressionable years of his youth, and many pages of his prophecy show how deeply the features of that wide and varied prospect were stamped on his mind."<sup>2</sup>

Anathoth was a small town, off the great trade routes, but only about four miles from Jerusalem, where the life of the nation centered. It is not to be thought that Jeremiah would grow up without frequent visits to the city, where he would watch people and talk with them, learning all the time what was going on in the world as well as in the minds of those he met. Perhaps it was in Jerusalem, or it may have been in Anathoth, that Jeremiah watched the potter at work and drew a parable from this every-day task. It is plain that he lived near to the realm of the every-day. He must have lived much in the country, however, for his preaching abounds in outdoor references. When he is called to his prophetic office he has a vision of an almond

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<sup>1</sup>Jeremiah 12.6.

<sup>2</sup>Skinner, Prophecy and Religion, 18-19.





tree.<sup>1</sup> When he rebukes the nation on one occasion he says, "Yea, the stork in the heavens knoweth her appointed time; and the turtle-dove and the swallow and the crane observe the time of their coming; but my people know not the law of Jehovah."<sup>2</sup> These are but two of the many instances of nature symbolism and references in Jeremiah's discourses.

With this background, Jeremiah was brought up in the best traditions of his people, as might be expected of the child of a family whose line could be traced back to the time of Moses. To quote Gordon:

The lore of the nation's history was the kernel of education in those days, and Jeremiah betrays a thorough acquaintance with that story, when he compares the past religion and the present. He knew of Egypt and its slavery, of the desert travelling, and he was sufficiently equipped with knowledge to connect moral and historical causes. He was educated in the political situation of his day to a most remarkable degree, and he assessed the value of Egyptian militarism more accurately than any man of his time...Another proof that Jeremiah was an educated man in his day is found in the fact that he looked to the North for this invasion, because it is written across the history of Palestine that all her most devastating and effective invasions have come from there....So familiar is he with the religion of Egypt that he can quote from the ritual of the <sup>funeral</sup> worship of Adonis in Egypt (ch. 22.18), and he does this with penetrating appositeness over the death of the pro-Egyptian king, Jehoiakim. His intellectual stature allowed him to smile at the puerile images of the Baal worship, while he showed more than a passing interest in the throw-back religion of Astarte. All these facts betray the large and well-disciplined and well-stocked mind in the prophet of Anathoth, with which he went forth on his high mission.<sup>3</sup>

More important even than this with respect to his religious education was his acquaintance with the prophets of earlier

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<sup>1</sup> Jeremiah 1.11.

<sup>2</sup> Jeremiah 8.7.

<sup>3</sup> Gordon, The Rebel Prophet, 49-50.



days. He had evidently studied their work and writings carefully, for he shows himself particularly akin to Hosea. In his earliest prophecies he makes frequent use of Hosea's favorite figure to express the backsliding of Israel from Yahweh, that of the unfaithful wife and the harlot. "In Hosea he found not only a teacher, but a spirit kindred to his own. Both were men of exceptionally tender and emotional temperament, sympathising intensely with the people on which they were constrained to pour out the vials of divine judgment ...It was from Hosea that the younger prophet received the religious interpretation of Israel's history which was the framework in which his own message was to be set."<sup>1</sup>

Jesus, like Jeremiah, was raised in a small town. It is still a moot question whether he was born at Bethlehem or Nazareth, but that question need not concern us in this discussion. It is sufficient to know that his youthful years were spent in the town of Nazareth, a town of a few thousand souls, near the south end of the

|                   |                                                             |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| Jesus'            | Sea of Galilee. On the spot there is at present a           |
| Home              |                                                             |
| <u>Background</u> | little town of <u>En-Nasira</u> . The site is surrounded by |
|                   | hills and an abundance of fig-trees and olive-trees.        |

"At the highest point to the north-west of the district, towers the hill Jebel es-Sin, commanding a view as far as Hermon on the north, to Mt. Carmel and the Bay of Acco or Akka on the west, and to the mountains on the other side of the Lake of Gennesareth on the east."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Skinner, Prophecy and Religion, 21-22.

<sup>2</sup>Holtzmann, Life of Jesus, 90. The rest of this description is based upon this book and Barton, Jesus of Nazareth, pp. 1-13.





The town was dependent for its water supply upon one well, the Pool of Mary. Eastward lies Mt. Tabor, about an hour and a half away, whence one has an extensive view over Palestine. In the time of Jesus<sup>1</sup> there was a little hamlet on the top, which has been suggested as the original of the proverb of Jesus, "A city that is set upon a hill cannot be hid." Three miles to the northwest was the town of Sepphoris, where Herod Antipas had his capital. "On great roads, north and south of the town's girdle of hills, passed to and fro the many-colored traffic between Egypt and Mesopotamia and the Orient. Traders, pilgrims, Herods--'the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them' (Matt. iv. 8)--all within reach, and travelling no faster as a rule than the camel cared to go--they formed a panorama of life for a thoughtful and imaginative boy. More than one allusion to king's clothes comes in his recorded teaching (Matt. vi.29, xi.8), and it was here that he saw them--and noticed them and remembered."<sup>2</sup>

The many understanding references to plants, animals, birds--all of nature--so well known as to need no illustration, that we find in Jesus' teaching point to a love of the country that must have colored his whole boyhood. He knows nature, knows the lore of her creatures, and draws freely therefrom when he wants to illustrate a point in language all can understand, for to him they were the things most readily understood. There is a distinct similarity here between Jeremiah and Jesus, not approached by the other prophets with

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<sup>1</sup> Josephus, B.J., iv. 56,61; quoted in Holtzmann, Jesus, 91.

<sup>2</sup> Glover, The Jesus of History, 29.





the possible exception of Amos. When Ezekiel speaks of an eagle<sup>1</sup>, it is an eagle that plants trees. Jesus' eagles are not so, but "Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together."<sup>2</sup>

The date of Jesus' birth is not certain. Matt. 2.1 and Lk. 1.5 agree that he was born in the days of King Herod. "The king who is meant is certainly Herod I., the founder of the Idumaeen dynasty (40 or 37 B.C.--4.B.C.)"<sup>3</sup> Luke's further reference to the census of Quirinius<sup>4</sup> in connection with Jesus' birth complicates the question, since this census could hardly have been taken before 6 A.D.<sup>5</sup> General agreement, however, puts the birth of Jesus at some point about 6-4 B.C.

I do not propose to enter into a lengthy discussion of the Virgin Birth. Mathew<sup>6</sup> and Luke<sup>7</sup> both give genealogies of Jesus, very divergent, but agreeing in that both trace Jesus' descent through David, with Joseph, the husband of Mary, as the last link in the line. Moreover, in Luke 4.22 and John 1.45 and 6.42, Jesus is called the son of Joseph. Paul, too, refers to him as springing from the "seed of David."<sup>8</sup> Coupling these facts with Jesus' apparent ignorance of a Virgin birth and the fact that Mark and John, the latter of whom was particularly concerned with the exaltation of Jesus as the Christ pre-existent as the Logos of God, make no mention of it,

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<sup>1</sup>Ezekiel 17.2-5.

<sup>2</sup>Luke 17.37.

<sup>3</sup>Holtzmann, Jesus, 86.

<sup>4</sup>Luke 2.1-7.

<sup>5</sup>Holtzmann, Jesus, 87.

<sup>6</sup>Matt. 1.1-16.

<sup>7</sup>Luke 3.23-38.

<sup>8</sup>Romans 1.3.



I shall pass over the question and proceed on the assumption that Jesus was mortal man, born in like manner as other men.

If the references to Jesus' descent from the line of David are to be relied upon, this high and holy line would give him a further likeness to Jeremiah, but his point must not be pressed too far, for the desire to prove Jesus the Messiah would be a powerful urge for his followers to trace his descent from David. Yet Jesus himself<sup>1</sup> affirmed that the Messiah could not be the true son of David, since David calls the Messiah his lord. Regardless of the line of his descent, however, we are warranted in assuming that his was a religious home. A boy could hardly have asked penetrating questions of the doctors in the Temple<sup>2</sup> if he had not been well taught. The fact that the family went every year to the feast of the passover in Jerusalem<sup>3</sup> and that Jesus, as a first-born son, was according to the Law presented in the Temple on the forty-first day<sup>4</sup>, while not proving any special religious interest, at least show that Mary and Joseph were good Jews. If the early chapters of Matthew present a true picture, Joseph was a spiritual man, listening for the word of God, even as Mary was a spiritual woman. Moreover, Jesus' conception of the fatherhood of God could hardly have been as rich as it is if his earthly father had not been of a high character, nor could he well have had such a love for children and understanding of them if his home life had not been happy.

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<sup>1</sup>Mark 12.35-37.

<sup>2</sup>Luke 2.46-47.

<sup>3</sup>Luke 2.41.

<sup>4</sup>Luke 2.22.



I shall pass over the question and proceed to the remaining part  
 of the subject, which is, how far the law can be used to  
 enforce the moral law. It is a question of great importance, and  
 one which has been discussed by many of our great writers.  
 I shall not attempt to do more than to state the principal  
 arguments on both sides of the question, and leave it to you to  
 decide for yourselves. The first argument in favor of the law  
 is, that it is necessary for the preservation of the public  
 peace and order. If we allow every man to do as he pleases,  
 without regard to the rights of others, the result would be  
 a state of anarchy, and the country would be a lawless  
 wilderness. The second argument is, that the law is necessary  
 to enforce the moral law. If we do not punish the wicked,  
 we are teaching them that their wickedness is no crime, and  
 that they may do as they please without fear of punishment.  
 The third argument is, that the law is necessary to protect  
 the rights of the weak against the oppression of the strong.  
 If we do not have a law to protect the poor and the  
 oppressed, they will be at the mercy of the rich and the  
 powerful. The fourth argument is, that the law is necessary  
 to promote the general happiness of the community. If we  
 do not have a law to punish the wicked, the good will be  
 discouraged, and the result will be a general decline in  
 the moral and social condition of the country.

Though not living in a priestly home, as had Jeremiah, Jesus had the usual religious training of a good Jewish boy. "Philo, the Jew of Alexandria, a contemporary of Jesus, tells us (Leg. ad Gaium, 31) that his people were instructed in the Law from the tenderest years of their childhood; and Josephus, also, says (Contra Apion., ii.178), that as soon as the young Jew was able to apprehend at all, he learnt Jesus' Training

the laws, and was able to repeat them more easily than he could his own name."<sup>1</sup> There was a synagogue at Nazareth<sup>2</sup> where Jesus would have heard the Law read many times. Perhaps he studied with the rabbi at the synagogue, though this must be a matter for conjecture. At any rate, wherever he gained it, Jesus had a thorough knowledge of the Old Testament scriptures. His teaching abounds in quotations and references from them, from the Law, from the Biblical history, and from the Prophets. He was evidently able to read the original Hebrew, for he read the roll in the Synagogue on at least one occasion.<sup>3</sup> His familiarity with the Prophets is attested not only by the similarity of many of his teachings with theirs but also by his care to fulfill certain of the specific prophecies relating to the Messiah, such as his entrance into Jerusalem.<sup>4</sup> His sense of affinity with Jeremiah in particular will appear later.

It is clear that the immediate backgrounds of these two great men were similar in many respects. Both were from small towns

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<sup>1</sup> Holtzmann, Jesus, 98.

<sup>3</sup> Luke 4.16.

<sup>2</sup> Mark 6.2.

<sup>4</sup> Zech. 9.9; Mark 11.1-10.





and the country, with access to more important centers and the life of the world of politics and commerce. Both were from religious homes, with an early training in things religious. Jeremiah had less to study in the Scriptures, both as to the Law and the Prophets, but what he had he knew and understood. Jesus, with more to learn from, had trained himself so well that he, the simple carpenter, was a source of astonishment to those who knew him. Jesus' trade as a carpenter seems to have no parallel in Jeremiah.

There is another closely related point in which we may draw a comparison. In giving the account of his call, Jeremiah says: "Now the word of Jehovah came unto me, saying, Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee, and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee; I have appointed thee a prophet unto the nations. Then said I, Ah, Lord Jehovah! behold, I know not how to speak; for I am a child. But

Jehovah said unto me, Say not, I am a child; for to whomsoever I shall send thee thou shalt go, and whatsoever I shall command thee thou shalt speak."<sup>1</sup> Taking the word translated "child" (na'ar) as applying most aptly to a boy of about twelve years of age, Gordon says, "As soon as the boy in Anathoth came to years of understanding, he was conscious of a destiny. He was not like others. He had a mission in life. He had a definite call from God. Henceforth he knew that

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<sup>1</sup>  
Jeremiah 1.4-7.

and the manner, with respect to some important details and the life  
of the world of politics and society. There were some religious  
people, who are really interested in religious subjects. I remember that  
in 1911, in the beginning, when he was in the East and the West, he  
was not as much as before, but he was still very much interested in  
the world of politics and society. He was still very much interested in  
the world of politics and society. He was still very much interested in  
the world of politics and society.

There is another closely related point in which he was  
very much interested. In 1911, when he was in the East and the West,  
he was not as much as before, but he was still very much interested in  
the world of politics and society. He was still very much interested in  
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He was still very much interested in the world of politics and society.  
He was still very much interested in the world of politics and society.  
He was still very much interested in the world of politics and society.

God was behind him, for God sent him into the world. Before he was born his life was planned by the Divine."<sup>1</sup> Beside this Gordon places the story of Jesus' appearance in the temple at twelve years of age, and quotes his "Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?"<sup>2</sup> as evidence that even at this age he was conscious of his vocation, which, according to Gordon, would place his and Jeremiah's definite vocational consciousness at the same age.

We must proceed with more caution than this here, however.

In a footnote on the word na'ar, Skinner says:

The word may of course denote any age from infancy up to the verge of middle life....Considering that Jeremiah was unmarried, that his renunciation of married life was a consequence of his vocation (xvi.1), and that early marriages are the rule among Orientals, it is quite probable that he was under 20 when the call came to him.<sup>3</sup>

The word has been variously interpreted, but most commentators seem to agree that twelve years would be too young. Moreover, the fact that only five years after this experience Jeremiah was threatened with death by his friends in Anathoth for his advocacy of the Deuteronomic Reform makes it unlikely that he could have been much under twenty when his call experience came. A boy of seventeen or a little over would hardly have had influence enough to have caused such severe methods to be planned against him.

Likewise, in the story of Jesus in the temple, Holtzmann points out that, "The use of the word 'Father' to indicate God was already customary at that time in Israel; it was readily employed

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<sup>1</sup>Gordon, The Rebel Prophet, 230.

<sup>2</sup>Luke 2.49.

<sup>3</sup>Skinner, Prophecy and Religion, 24, footnote.





owing to the reluctance which existed to use the term 'God.' The boy is alluding therefore to his predilection for religious questions."<sup>1</sup> He may have felt a definite sense of his vocation at this time, but it is probably more nearly true that both Jeremiah and Jesus felt their interests turning toward religion in their early youth without realizing the true import of that bent. Jeremiah came to feel that God had always been shaping his destiny. Jesus never says so in so many words, as does Jeremiah, but he must have seen the hand of God in his life as he grew older. His consciousness of Sonship would have to have a basis in some such feeling.

When Jeremiah received his call experience he was told that he had been appointed to be a "prophet unto the nations." He says, "Then Jehovah put forth his hand, and touched my mouth."<sup>2</sup> Jesus had an experience, which, while perhaps not the occasion of the awakening of his vocational consciousness, was of great import, and was somewhat similar. The account of the vision at the time of Jesus' baptism differs in the Gospels. In Mark, the earliest,<sup>3</sup> it relates entirely to Jesus himself. He sees the heavens opened and the Spirit "as a dove descending upon him: and a voice came out of the heavens, Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased." The other Gospels interpret it as having the voice heard by all,<sup>4</sup> addressed to others,<sup>5</sup> and finally as a vision of John the Baptist.<sup>6</sup> Holtzmann observes<sup>7</sup> that since all the Synoptics agree that down to the confession

<sup>1</sup> Holtzmann, 99-100.

<sup>2</sup> Jeremiah 1.9.

<sup>3</sup> Mark 1.10f.

<sup>4</sup> Lk. 3.21f.

<sup>5</sup> Matt. 3.16f.

<sup>6</sup> John 1.33f.

<sup>7</sup> Holtzmann, Jesus, 136.

being to the entrance which existed in the past, but the  
boy is affording opportunity to the present for religious  
we may now take a definite view of his position at this time, and  
it is probably more than that which has been said and done, but  
interests himself in religious matters in his early years, and  
possessing the same degree of interest. He was not so  
not that always been looking for his health. He was never  
so many words, as when he was in the land of  
and in his life as a new order. His religiousness at present  
was to have a look at his own feeling.

When I was in the hospital, my wife experienced an  
that he had been expected to be a "patient" in the hospital.  
eye, "I was in the hospital for my health, and I was not  
and an experience, which, with perhaps not the intention of his  
examining of his religious consciousness, was of great interest  
was somewhat different. The account of the state of the  
positive effect in the hospital. In fact, his religiousness, it  
entirely to have almost. He was the patient, and the  
"as a boy, he was in the hospital, and a whole lot of his  
from the up and down, but in case I am well pleased, I am  
perhaps I have it as having the same kind of life, religious  
state," and finally as a result of the hospital, it was  
observed, that again all the religiousness of the hospital

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|            |            |
|------------|------------|
| 1. 100-100 | 2. 100-100 |
| 3. 100-100 | 4. 100-100 |
| 5. 100-100 | 6. 100-100 |
| 7. 100-100 | 8. 100-100 |



of Peter recognition of Jesus' Messiahship had been confined to himself, the Mark account is likely the more true, that the whole was an inner vision of Jesus, with the voice and the appearance of the Spirit, the whole being in the line of the great call visions of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel. Of the three, the likeness is greatest to that of Jeremiah, who relates no elaborate vision such as those of Isaiah and Ezekiel. I have said that this may not have been the awakening of the vocational consciousness of Jesus, but it was certainly the awakening of Jesus' belief in himself as the Messiah. Here was a great turning point in his life, even as the calls were turning points in the lives of the prophets.

There is another point of likeness between the two men in that neither married. Although nothing is said in the New Testament one way or the other, it has never been seriously questioned that Jesus remained unmarried. This was not a general among the prophets. We Neither have no way of knowing Amos's state, but Hosea,<sup>1</sup> Isaiah,<sup>2</sup> Married and Ezekiel<sup>3</sup> all refer to their wives. Jeremiah alone definitely proclaims himself unmarried and gives as his reason a command from Jehovah:

The word of Jehovah came also unto me, saying, Thou shalt not take thee a wife, neither shalt thou have sons or daughters, in this place. For thus saith Jehovah concerning the sons and concerning the daughters that are born in this place, and concerning their mothers that bare them, and concerning their fathers that begat them in this land: They shall die grievous

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<sup>1</sup> Hosea, Chs. 1-3.

<sup>2</sup> Isaiah 8.3, etc.

<sup>3</sup> Ezekiel 24.18.



deaths: they shall not be lamented, neither shall they be buried; they shall be as dung upon the face of the ground; and they shall be consumed by the sword, and by famine; and their dead bodies shall be food for the birds of the heavens, and for the beasts of the earth.<sup>1</sup>

It was no disapproval of marriage as such that moved Jeremiah to this position. When a man can look with sympathy upon "the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride,"<sup>2</sup> when he can

Why Jeremiah's  
Celibacy? build his thought of the relationship between Israel and Yahweh as that between wife and husband, he can not be said to be prejudiced in favor of celibacy. Jeremiah was so human, so passionate in his love for Israel, that we can only believe that he was at least able to feel the passion of human love of man and woman. He plainly says that it was the fear of destruction to come that kept him from establishing a home. Speaking of this passage quoted above, Gordon writes, "The very message itself, with its Divine imperative, reveals behind it a double pull in the heart of Jeremiah, for why should this word have been needed if some lovely woman's face had not looked in at the window of his soul? Do we not see here the steeling of the prophet's resolution against the fluttering of the bird of love?"<sup>3</sup> Professor Lofthouse likewise asks, "Had Jeremiah to tear from his heart some face that he had longed to keep there for ever?"<sup>4</sup> Perhaps we might say that it was Jeremiah's vocational

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<sup>1</sup>Jeremiah 16.1-4.

<sup>2</sup>Jeremiah 7.34.

<sup>3</sup>Gordon, The Rebel Prophet, 232.

<sup>4</sup>Lofthouse, Jeremiah, 93.





consciousness that kept him from marrying, but there had been no deterrent in the vocations of other prophets that had precluded their marriages. Rather, we had best let the matter rest with the information we have given in the passage, that Jeremiah remained unmarried rather than plunge a family into the destruction that he was sure was coming.

Why, now, did Jesus remain unmarried? We have no word from him on the subject. He does not explicitly renounce a home, but we have indications at a number of points that he had none. For example, he says, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the heaven have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head."<sup>1</sup> With a little imagination one can find a special regard between Jesus and Why Jesus' Celibacy?

Mary of Bethany, or see a woman's love in the conduct of Mary Magdalene on the Easter Morn, but we have nothing beyond its possibility to show that such love existed. We know, however, that Jesus had the highest regard for the marriage state, for when he was asked about divorce he said, "Have ye not read that, He who made them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh? So that they are no more two, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."<sup>2</sup>

Without falling far behind Jesus in our conception of the sanctity of the marriage relation we cannot think it unworthy of

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<sup>1</sup> Luke 9.58.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. 19.4-6.





him to have felt the pull of human love; yet, he renounced that pull. Gordon says, "Greatly daring, we would venture farther and suggest that just as the prophet made his renunciation because of the terrible time ahead, likewise our Lord saw disaster approaching His own generation, and drew back from human entanglements that could only end in heart-breaking. With the same imagery before Him, He could repeat the thought of the prophet, 'But woe to them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days.' (Mark xiii. 17). Was not this just the dread at the back of the prophet's mind? And is it not proved beyond dispute, by Schweitzer and others, that this sense of impending disaster hung continually around the thoughts of Jesus, as indeed they did of Jeremiah?"<sup>1</sup> I fully agree with Dr. Gordon that to renounce matrimony under such conditions would be a "high and honourable part," just as it was in the case of Jeremiah, but I can not believe that this was the determining factor in his decision, though it may well have had a part. I think the key to Jesus' decision is to be found in his reply to the disciples when they pressed the question of marriage mentioned above. At that time he said, "There are eunuchs, that were so born from their mother's womb: and there are eunuchs, that were made eunuchs by man: and there are eunuchs, that made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake."<sup>2</sup> Is it not more likely that ~~it~~ it was for "the kingdom of heaven's sake" that Jesus remained unmarried, that is, that he felt that marriage would hinder him in his work? When his mission was more important than life

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<sup>1</sup> Gordon, The Rebel Prophet, 234.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. 19.12.



itself, why not more important than marriage?

- Many of the biographies of Jesus practically avoid this question. Accordingly, having reached the above position independently, I was pleased to find that my judgment concurs with that of such a scholar as Weiss, who writes:

Much that is trifling, far-fetched, and perverted has been imported into the answer given to that question; and often enough the answer has in the long run violated the deepest interest which gave occasion to it. It is not even sufficient to answer that in His time Jesus did not meet, or, as we prefer to say, ever could meet, any heart that was worthy of His; for love cannot be at all merited, and the similarity of the inner, and at the same time moral life, which the closest bond which unites hearts presupposes, is always only a similarity that is growing. Here also the reason is rather to be found in the uniqueness of His calling, which demanded the whole man, and left no room for the fulfilment of that universal human calling which, with few exceptions, unites itself with all human ways of living....Just because His heart, His love, and His life belonged to all, whom He had come to serve in conformity with His calling, no single individual should be able to boast of having possessed all these in a singular manner.<sup>1</sup>

#### CHARACTER OF MINISTRY OF EACH

The ministries of Jeremiah and Jesus, considered generally, are widely different, as might be expected when one lasted forty years or more and the other only about three. It is in particular situations that similarities show themselves. As a background for our further comparisons, let us sketch very briefly the high points in the lives of these two immortals.

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<sup>1</sup>Weiss, Life of Jesus, Vol. I, 293.





After his call, in about 626 B.C., Jeremiah began his prophecy by proclaiming doom upon Judah through the invasion of the Scythians, calling her to repentance. The invasion passed on.

When the Deuteronomic Reform came in 621 B.C., Jeremiah was to be

Work of Jeremiah found among the supporters of it,<sup>1</sup> but before long he perceived that the reform was not deep enough and ceased to give his support, though he never actively opposed the Deuteronomic regime.

After the battle of Carchemish in 605 B.C. when Nebuchadrezzar defeated Necho of Egypt, Jeremiah strove to influence Judah to throw in her lot with Babylon. One of the great moments in his life was his sermon in the Temple, when he was nearly killed for preaching against the Temple worship and abuses.<sup>2</sup> Later he wrote his prophecies, but when Baruch, his scribe, read them before the people and they were taken to the King, Jehoiakim threw them into the fire. Hence, the work had to be done over again.<sup>3</sup>

Jeremiah proved unable to stop the revolt of Judah from the sway of Babylon; in 597 Jerusalem was captured and 10,000 of her leaders carried away. For a time, Jeremiah enjoyed more success in dealing with the people, but not for long. Soon they were plotting again a revolt to Egypt, until in 586 the final destruction came and all but a poor remnant of Judah were carried into Babylon and captivity. Jeremiah had written the captives in Babylon before this second capture,

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<sup>1</sup> Jeremiah 11.1-8.

<sup>2</sup> Jeremiah 7; 26.

<sup>3</sup> Jeremiah 36.





urging them to build for the future, seeing in them the hope for the future glory of a restored Judah. Now he remained in Judah to help Gedaliah with the remnant, but the latter was assassinated and the remainder of Judah fled to Egypt, where we last see Jeremiah vainly trying to stop their turning to the worship of the queen of heaven.

Turning now to the ministry of Jesus, we find that there is, first of all, general disagreement with regard to his chronology. Since this is not a critical discussion of such subjects, I shall content myself with steering a middle course with Professor Peritz, who, in his article on New Testament Chronology in the Work of Jesus Abingdon Commentary,<sup>1</sup> leans toward the conclusions of Moffatt when he decides that the birth of Jesus occurred about 6 B.C., his crucifixion about 29-30 A.D., more likely in 30, and that his ministry lasted about three years.

After his baptism experience, Jesus retired to the wilderness to fight out alone the problems of his life. It is this that we know as "The Temptations." John records as his first sign the miracle at the wedding in Cana of Galilee,<sup>2</sup> which he places as the real beginning of his ministry, and a series of events connected with his early ministry in Judaea. According to John,<sup>3</sup> Jesus went down to Jerusalem after a short stay in Capernaum, and there really began his ministry. He departed into Galilee, ministering in Samaria

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<sup>1</sup> Abingdon Commentary, 874-876.

<sup>2</sup> John 2.1-11.

<sup>3</sup> John 2.13-22.



for a few days.<sup>1</sup>

Jesus now began his more active ministry in Galilee. Rejected in his own town of Nazareth,<sup>2</sup> he removed to Capernaum. He called his first four disciples, the four fisherman, and started on a preaching tour in Galilee. On this tour, Matthew was called,<sup>3</sup> and certain works performed that aroused growing hostility on the part of the scribes and the Pharisees.

After this trip, Jesus chose the Twelve,<sup>4</sup> gave his Sermon on the Mount,<sup>5</sup> and set out for a second tour in Galilee. We hear of his teaching and healing by the Sea of Galilee, including a number of parables and miracles. A third tour was begun by his second rejection at Nazareth.<sup>6</sup> Either during or just after this tour, the Twelve were sent out by twos for a period of ministry through the country.<sup>7</sup>

Jesus now took a northward journey for retirement, returning through Decapolis and remaining briefly by the Sea again before taking a second journey into the north, during which we hear of Peter's confession, the transfiguration, and Jesus' prophecy of his own death and resurrection. This journey was ended by Jesus' reappearance in Capernaum.

At this point, John recounts an autumn visit to Jerusalem with a visit to the feast of tabernacles. The chief importance of this

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<sup>1</sup> John 4.

<sup>2</sup> Lk. 4.16-30.

<sup>3</sup> Mt. 9.9-13.

<sup>4</sup> Mk. 3.13-19a; Lk. 6.12-19.

<sup>5</sup> Mt. 5-7.

<sup>6</sup> Mt. 13.54-58; Mk. 6.1-6a.

<sup>7</sup> Mt. 14.1-12; Mk. 6.14-29; Lk. 9.1-6.





account is its effect upon the chronology of Jesus' ministry, for if the feast of tabernacles is to be identified with the Passover, it would mean that a fourth Passover had been introduced into Jesus' active life and that his ministry had lasted three to four years.

The next period of Jesus' ministry is that of his trip from Galilee to Jerusalem, known as the Perean ministry. Luke gives the most material on this period, relating several incidents and teachings not mentioned by the others. It was a period of extensive teaching, preaching, and healing along the way.

With his arrival in Jerusalem, Passion Week began. Sunday was the day of the Triumphal Entry, Monday that of the dramatic cleansing of the Temple. Tuesday was spent in teaching, controversy with the Pharisees and scribes, and a discourse concerning the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the world. There is no record of the events of Wednesday. Thursday was marked by the Last Supper and Jesus' last discourses with his disciples. Friday was the day of his betrayal, trial before the Jewish authorities, trial before Pilate, crucifixion, and death.

For comparison with Jeremiah this is as far as we need to go. The accounts of the resurrection and the forty days immediately following do not belong to the mortal life of Jesus, and as such are not comparable to the experience of any man.





We can see at a glance certain differences in the ministry of Jesus and that of Jeremiah aside from their difference in length. One striking thing is that no miracles are attributed to Jeremiah. Jeremiah is like the other major prophets in that respect. One must go back to the accounts of Elijah and Elisha, the latter in particular,

|                                              |                                                        |
|----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| Differences<br>in their<br><u>Ministries</u> | to find stories of miracles performed by the prophets. |
|                                              | This points to a much more important difference.       |

Jeremiah had no occasion to perform any healing miracles, for instance, since he was concerned with the nation and not the individuals of the nation. At the later period of his ministry, when he came to his New Covenant conception, he centered more attention upon individuals, but he never was concerned with their welfare as was Jesus, nor did he minister to them personally. It is a powerful witness to Jesus' interest in other persons, as well as to his own power and psychological understanding, that so many stories of miracles have come down to us through the Gospels. This is entirely apart from any question as to the validity of the miracles. Some of the most striking incidents in Jesus' ministry, aside from the miracles, are those in which he made contact with other individuals, such as the woman at the well, Martha and Mary, Zacchaeus, the rich young ruler, etc. Here he is much different from Jeremiah, who, as far as we know, concerned himself with individuals only when he felt he could do most for the nation by so doing, as when he denounced Jehoiakim and others.

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A second difference is in the fact that Jesus went about in Palestine teaching and preaching as well as healing, repeatedly traversing the country. About the only parallel to these journeys we can find in Jeremiah is his effort in support of the Reform Covenant in the first part of his ministry, when he was commanded by Yahweh, "Proclaim all these words in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, saying, Hear ye the words of this covenant, and do them."<sup>1</sup> The rest of Jeremiah's work seems to have taken place in and around Jerusalem. This was but natural, since his work was in large measure political, as I shall point out below, and he needed to be near the capital.

A third point of difference is to be found in the fact that Jeremiah had no disciples who travelled with him with the exception of his scribe, Baruch, who may not have been with him at all until the roll was written. Jesus, on the other hand, had the Twelve with him through nearly all his ministry, whom he trained for future work and even sent out during his own lifetime. Moreover, we are told that crowds followed him to hear his words and have him heal them. This, of course, was largely due to the personal ministry mentioned above. Had he been consistently preaching doom and disaster as had Jeremiah, the crowds would very likely have followed someone else.

This brings us to the question of the teaching methods

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<sup>1</sup> Jeremiah 11.6.





of the two men. Let it first be noted that neither ever wrote anything. Jeremiah, some twenty years after he began to preach, dictated the substance of his preaching up to that time to his scribe, thus preserving his prophecies for us. Jesus merely taught by word of mouth. The only writing we ever hear of his doing is that mentioned in the somewhat doubtful account<sup>1</sup> of the woman taken in adultery, when Teaching he wrote in the sand with the point of a stick. No one Methods of Each ever recorded the words he wrote; probably they were merely the unconscious scrawl of one who scratches marks as he thinks. It need not be thought that neither Jeremiah nor Jesus could write, though some authors have argued to that end. Many authors who are perfectly able to write or use a typewriter employ "scribes" in the form of stenographers, and many great preachers never leave any writings to posterity.

We should also observe that Jesus, unlike Jeremiah, was a teacher before he was a prophet. Accordingly, his methods are rather different. Influenced as he was by the methods of the scribes and rabbis of his day, much of Jesus' teaching and disputation was done by quotation of scripture. Speaking of Jesus' proof that the Messiah need not be the blood son of David, Holtzmann observes that "This belief in the infallibility of the Old Testament Scripture Jesus shares with the Scribes of his time."<sup>2</sup> It was his particular power, however, to pick out the important points in the Old Testament

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<sup>1</sup> John 7.58-8.11.

<sup>2</sup> Holtzmann, Jesus, 96.





Scripture. For instance, when he was asked which was the first and greatest commandment, he replied, "The first is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God, the Lord is one; and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength (Deut. 6.4ff.). The second is this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself (Lev. 19.18)"<sup>1</sup> Here he seized at the meat in the very books that were being interpreted most strictly in a legalistic manner, incidentally summing up in the two the whole ten of the Mosaic Ten Commandments.

Jeremiah had no such body of canonical scripture to which he could refer. Perhaps if he had he would have used it in a different way. He does, however, show a strong influence from Hosea in the opening prophecies of his book, particularly in his conceptions of Israel as the bride of Jehovah. He never, however, uses the formula, "Have you not read?" or "It is written," and similar modes of reference. Both were dependent upon their predecessors, though in rather different ways. As we shall see, however, in certain critical situations Jesus spoke out in terms used by the prophets, showing a deep acquaintance with them, much like that of Jeremiah with Hosea, which led him to consciously or unconsciously to imitate their expression.

Both are notable in their teaching for their use of Parables. In spite of the fact that Jeremiah had not reached the plane of such literary parables as those of the Good Samaritan and the

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<sup>1</sup> Mark 12.28.



Prodigal Son, there is much similarity between them. One point is in their subject matter. Jeremiah drew a lesson from the workshop of the Potter,<sup>1</sup> Jesus from the woman sweeping for a lost coin;<sup>2</sup> Jeremiah likened Israel to two baskets of figs,<sup>3</sup> Jesus likened the Kingdom of God to a net cast into the sea for a draft.<sup>4</sup> It is in these simple parables that the greatest likeness occurs. Ezekiel developed more elaborate parables than those of Jeremiah. The parable continued to develop. "We must realise that the perfect artistry and truth of Jesus' Parables are the climax of a long process, and while the genius of Jesus does account for the spiritual insight and passion of these, their origin goes far back into the history of the Hebrew people."<sup>5</sup>

A greater similarity exists in the case of a few acted parables, or symbolic actions. There are four symbolical acts of Jeremiah to which I would call attention. In the first he purchased a new linen girdle, wore it for a short time, and then hid it in a cleft in a rock by the Euphrates. Later he went to retrieve it and found it so badly marred that it could not be used.<sup>6</sup> This he then used as a symbol of the fate of Judah's pride. In the second, he bought a potter's earthen bottle, took with him priests and elders, and went out into the valley of Hinnom, where the sacrifices of the flaming Moloch-worship were performed, and there broke the bottle,

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<sup>1</sup> Jeremiah 18.1-10.

<sup>2</sup> Luke 15.8-10.

<sup>3</sup> Jeremiah 24.

<sup>4</sup> Matt. 13.47-50.

<sup>5</sup> Gordon, Rebel Prophet, 251.

<sup>6</sup> Jeremiah 13.1-7.





with the prophecy that even so should Jehovah break the people and their city for their turning to other gods.<sup>1</sup> The third was his purchase of a field at Anathoth during the siege of Jerusalem, as a symbolic prophecy that captivity should not be the end of Judah, but that the people would once more be gathered and take up a national existence in their old lands. This symbol he discusses and interprets at greater length than his others.<sup>2</sup> The last of the four acts is his offer of wine to the Rechabites in the Temple. In accordance with their vows and the commandments of their founder, they refused to drink. This Jeremiah used as an object lesson to impress upon the Judaeans the enormity of their offence in failing to follow the commands of their God when the Rechabites followed the commands of a man.<sup>3</sup>

In the ministry of Jesus, alongside the great literary parables, we find several of these symbolic actions. For instance, he took a child and set it in the midst of his hearers to impress upon them their need for child-like trust and purity.<sup>4</sup> One of his outstanding symbolical actions was his riding into Jerusalem upon an ass's colt, the most lowly of beasts of burden, to symbolize the King's lowliness. There is another element present in this action, however, which is not present in those of Jeremiah. This time, according to John, Jesus is fulfilling a scripture, which said, "Fear

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<sup>1</sup> Jeremiah 19.1-13.

<sup>2</sup> Jeremiah 32.6-44.

<sup>3</sup> Jeremiah 35.1-18.

<sup>4</sup> Mark 9.36.

will be prepared to give an account of the people and  
their state for their country to other parts. The third was the  
purpose of a state of knowledge during the days of ignorance, as a  
general property and property should be the end of the state, but  
that the people would not give to others and form up a nation.  
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not, daughter of Zion: behold, thy King coming sitting on an ass's colt."<sup>1</sup> The most outstanding of Jesus' symbolical actions was the memorable occasion when he girded himself with a towel and washed the disciples' feet, explaining himself thus: "If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye also should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, A servant is not greater than his Lord; neither one that is sent greater than he that sent him."<sup>2</sup>

Burney, in his Poetry of Our Lord,<sup>3</sup> has pointed out that Jesus and Jeremiah were alike in their use of the poetic device of parallelism. Much of Jeremiah's prophecy is definitely written in poetic form. We do not have Jesus' so, but in such examples as:

"O that my head were waters,  
And mine eyes a fountain of tears"<sup>4</sup>

compared with:

"How shall we liken the kingdom of God?  
Or in what parable shall we set it forth?"

and:

"Love your enemies,  
Do good to them that hate you,  
Bless them that curse you,  
Pray for them that despitefully use you"

we have clear examples of the powerful use of this device.

Burney has also worked back from the Greek to the Aramaic in which the teachings of Jesus were spoken, in an attempt to discover

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<sup>1</sup> Mark 11.1-10; John 12.12-15.

<sup>2</sup> John 13.14-16.

<sup>3</sup> Quoted in Gordon, Rebel Prophet, 249.

<sup>4</sup> Jeremiah 9.1.



whether or not there is a poetic rhythm in them. Gordon says of Burney:

He finds, for instance, that the Lord's Prayer, Matt. vi.9-13, falls into a four-beat rhythm in the original, and that the Beatitudes fall into a three-beat rhythm. The Qinah rhythm, so typical of Jeremiah in his high and impassioned hours, is found likewise in the words of our Lord in His moments of emotion. The passage in Luke xiii.23ff. about entering in at the strait gate falls into perfect qinah form either in Hebrew or Aramaic. Once more, therefore, we may safely conclude that Jesus was a conscious Hebrew poet, and stood side by side with Jeremiah.<sup>1</sup>

I am not sure that this conclusion is any too safe, for there is too much chance of a slip between the utterance of the words by Jesus and their re-translation into Hebrew or Aramaic, too much opportunity for forcing the text into certain forms. It may be suggested that it may have been the work of the authors of the Gospels that is responsible for the poetic form of some of the utterances of Jesus. On the other hand, poetic form would have been most likely to be remembered by those hearing them once. It appears that the point of resemblance in poetic usage may be made, but it must not be pressed too far.

In this survey of the teaching methods of Jeremiah and Jesus, it is apparent that, while Jesus far excels the prophet in his artistry and workmanship in many particulars, especially in the parables, their fundamental principles are essentially similar. It may be added that at times, as at the end of his ministry, the prophet

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<sup>1</sup> Gordon, The Rebel Prophet, 249.





in Jesus came to the front. His parables of warning (Matt. 21.28-22.14; Mark 12.1-12; Lk. 20.9-19), his woes against the Pharisees (Matt. 23; Mk. 38-40; Lk. 20.45-47), and his prophecies concerning the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the world (Matt. 24,25; Mk. 13; Lk. 21.5-38) all recall the powerful prophetic utterances of the great spirits who came before him. In these he is once more like Jeremiah, bringing warning of disaster and the call to repentance.

Jesus is mainly unlike Jeremiah at one of the latter's most characteristic points. Jeremiah was a political figure. Dr. Gordon devotes a whole chapter to a discussion of the statesmanship of Jeremiah. His politics were dictated by his religion; at the same time, political implications bulked large in his religion. A great Political Life of the Two part of his life was spent in attempts to steer Judah through the reefs of international politics. The ruin he foresaw would engulf individuals, but it was of a distinctly national character. Seeing Judah's hope of maintaining a neutral existence gone, he fixed upon rising Babylon as the new power which should be Yahweh's instrument and struggled to persuade Judah to submit to her at the same time that he was proclaiming the necessity of repentance for the nation's sins. To do this he flung himself into the arena of national affairs, supporting Josiah through most of his life, fighting Jehoiakim throughout his thirteen-year reign. He even





dared to stand in the latter king's very court and upbraid him, warning him of Jehovah's wrath at his injustice and his service of heathen gods, denouncing his extravagance in his building operations, climaxing his tirade with a terrible judgment upon the king: "They shall not lament for him, saying, Ah my brother! or, Ah sister! They shall not lament for him, saying, Ah Lord! or, Ah his glory! He shall be buried with the burial of an ass, drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem." <sup>1</sup>

Jeremiah's political activity was not confined to the court in Judah. When the first exiles were in Babylon, he wrote to them, counselling submission and growth in their new home, which he assured them would be only temporary.<sup>2</sup> In Jerusalem he still counselled submission to Babylon, even when the city was being besieged for the second time, for which he was imprisoned as a traitor. When the Babylonians carried the second group of exiles into captivity, Jeremiah elected to remain with Gedaliah, the governor of the remnant in Judah, to assist in their rule, but was carried off to Egypt when the group revolted.

This political activity has no real parallel in Jesus. In spite of his visits to Jerusalem in observance of religious feasts, he was so little known at the capital that his betrayer had to arrange a signal so that those who were to arrest him should know which to take.<sup>3</sup> Jesus had eschewed political honor for himself at the outset

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<sup>1</sup> Jeremiah 22.18-19.

<sup>2</sup> Jeremiah 29.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. 26.48.



of his career.<sup>1</sup> He evidently considered it no part of his mission, even as Messiah, to take part in the politics of the nation, in spite of the fact that it was still torn by factions holding over from the civil wars of a few years before. Even at the end of his ministry, when the political question was put squarely up to him at Jerusalem in the question as to payment of tribute, he took a Roman coin, asked whose image and superscription was upon it, and, upon being assured that it was Caesar's, said, "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's."<sup>2</sup> This might be interpreted as a pro-Roman utterance, but it was simply a clever parry of a tricky question, and was so interpreted by those who put the question, since they did not press the advantage a pro-Roman reply would have given them. Trattner, a Jewish writer, gives this explanation of Jesus' coming to Jerusalem, which at the same time probably explains his shunning politics: "The plan of Jesus was to enter Jerusalem and there await the coming of the visible messianic age. He is not to establish it or try to set it up. God will do that. His only function is to proclaim it and let people know that he will be the Messiah."<sup>3</sup>

On the other hand, the same writer points out that it was for political rather than for primarily religious reasons that Jesus was done away: "It must always be remembered that the Sadducean

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<sup>1</sup> Matt. 4.10.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. 22.21.

<sup>3</sup> Trattner, As a Jew Sees Jesus, 119.





priests, through fear of this tyrant [Pilate], delivered Jesus into his hands--not simply because they saw in him a formidable religious rival, but primarily to avoid national danger. Jesus' teaching about himself as a messiah constituted an alarming menace fraught with the greatest jeopardy to the entire Jewish nation. In delivering the Galilean to Pilate they felt a very much needed precaution against revolution had been taken."<sup>1</sup> It is an interesting point of contrast that Jeremiah, the man who was a political figure, met his death--so tradition has it--at the hands of those he denounced in Egypt for their worship of the Queen of Heaven, while Jesus, who had always eschewed politics, was crucified perhaps even more for political than for religious reasons.

There is one more point of comparison that should be made before we pass over to a comparison of the characters of the two men; that is to compare the critical public moment in each life.

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| <p>Critical<br/>Public<br/><u>Moments</u></p> | <p>Jeremiah had prophesied for some years against the popular religion and the politics of his day; he had stood in the court and defied the King; he had had his roll read in the outer court of the Temple, with its condemnations of the City. While all of these were dangerous, he did not reach the crisis of his life until he stood in the Temple gate and assailed the people's dependence upon the Temple building and their lip-reverence</p> |
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<sup>1</sup>Trattner, As a Jew Sees Jesus, 133.





to Yahweh therein, the ritual, and the usages of the Temple, proclaiming it a "den of robbers," and pronouncing destruction upon it.<sup>1</sup> "The primary purpose of the address was to utter a strong polemic against the temple and the worship there. Anything which Jeremiah may have added about the future fate of the people was subsidiary to this leading aim....The other general feature of the address is that the destruction which Jeremiah predicted was not contingent but absolute. It did not depend on any change in the conduct of the people, but was Yahweh's fixed will."<sup>2</sup> His pronouncement was strong enough to call down upon him the wrath of the priests, but he was saved by some of the leaders of the people, who insisted upon the liberty of prophecy. For Jeremiah this was definitely a declaration of war. From henceforth he was a marked man.

In the case of Jesus, though his own decision as to his general course of action was probably made before he and his little group of followers left Caesarea Philippi for Jerusalem, the critical public moment in his life came in a parallel incident to that of Jeremiah. I quote Mark's account of it:

And they came to Jerusalem: and he entered into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold and them that bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold the doves; and he would not suffer that any man should carry a vessel through the temple. And he taught, and said unto them, Is it not written, My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations? But ye have made it a den of robbers. And the chief priests and the scribes heard it, and sought how they might destroy him: for they feared him, for all the multitude was astonished at his teaching.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Jeremiah 7, 26.

<sup>2</sup> Welch, Jeremiah, 138-139.

<sup>3</sup> Mark 11.15-18.



In the time of Jeremiah the Temple was full of abuses. His principal charge was that it sheltered injustice and falsity, and that the people worshipped other gods and then came and stood before Yahweh in the Temple and called themselves justified.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, Ezekiel, a contemporary of Jeremiah during the earlier part of his own ministry, charges that heathen worship was even carried on in the Temple itself.<sup>2</sup> Jeremiah cried out in protest, "Is this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes? Behold, I, even I, have seen it, saith Jehovah...therefore will I do unto the house which is called by my name, wherein ye trust, and unto the place which I gave to you and to your fathers, as I did to Shiloh."<sup>3</sup> Since Shiloh had been destroyed, this was a direct prophecy of destruction.

Jesus must have been familiar with Jeremiah's work, even have consciously modelled his own conduct upon that of his illustrious predecessor, for he uses Jeremiah's very words where he accuses those in the Temple of making it a "Den of Robbers." May it not be that Jesus, knowing the conditions that had existed in the earlier Temple, Jeremiah's dramatic prophecy against it, and the impressive fulfillment of that prophecy in the Babylonian destruction of the city, when he saw the bad conditions in the Temple of his day with its commercialization, when he saw the shallowness and injustice

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<sup>1</sup>Jeremiah 7.8-10.

<sup>2</sup>Ezekiel, ch. 8.

<sup>3</sup>Jeremiah 7.11,14.





that were protected there, and when he saw the seriousness of political conditions in the nation with its constant revolts threatening to bring the punishment of Rome upon its head, felt his own duty to be the same as that of Jeremiah? He went even farther than Jeremiah had in that he undertook <sup>to</sup> cast out the Temple abusers himself, but his language and the whole color of the dramatic incident are strikingly similar to Jeremiah's.

Immediately after the cleansing of the Temple, Jesus uttered a prophecy against it that is of the same import as Jeremiah's prophecy that the earlier Temple would be made like Shiloh. Jesus' expression of the thought was, "Verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down."<sup>1</sup>

Jesus knew, too, the fate that nearly overtook Jeremiah when he made his attack upon the Temple. He surely foresaw that only a similar fate could await him. Nevertheless he carried out his attack. Jeremiah had powerful friends among the princes who saved him from the clutches of the priests, though for most of his life afterward he was hounded by those who sought to trip him up. Jesus, a mere outsider, had not a friend at court. Accordingly, he was shortly brought before a ruthless Roman court of law, a court more concerned with keeping order than with keeping justice. Jesus' attack upon the Temple, with what followed, led directly to his crucifixion.

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<sup>1</sup> Matt. 24.2.





## CHAPTER III

### PSYCHOLOGICAL COMPARISON

#### Character Sketch of Jeremiah

From the beginning to the end of his career one half of him cried 'Back,' and the other half cried 'Forward'....Jeremiah hated publicity and he snuddered to appear in the role of traitor to his country, and yet he finds himself the most public man of his day and the stigmatised traitor of his nation....His nature was shy and his heart tender. He shunned centres of social activity. He fought shy of marriage. But he posed as the supreme instrument in the hand of Jehovah. He dared to dictate to the king. He boasted that he knew the counsel of the Almighty. Here, indeed, is the perfect example of a subconscious conflict between shyness and superiority....This inner conflict pursued the prophet throughout his career. It seems never to have been resolved.

We can fully agree that the conflict was there, though may not agree in all particulars with Gordon's statement. For instance, his references to the farmer, the child in the street, the silver and the potter's wheel, the debtor and the creditor, the humility of thieves, the lamentation for the dead, and to brides and weddings<sup>2</sup> would hardly indicate that Jeremiah shunned social activity to any great extent. The conflict was rather between his humanity and his sense of mission. It has been altogether too fashionable to see only the gloom and pessimism in Jeremiah. That element is undeniably there, but it is not paramount, though such it seems at first glance.

Jeremiah was, first of all, intensely human. A glance at the references mentioned in the last paragraph above will indicate

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<sup>1</sup>Gordon, The Rebel Prophet, 20-21.

<sup>2</sup>Jeremiah 4.3; 6.11; 6.28,30; 18.3,6; 15.10; 2.26; 16.4; 2.32; 7.34.



something of the breadth of his human interest. When he speaks of "the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride,"<sup>1</sup> he is speaking with understanding, for he places these joyful pictures in direct contrast to the wasting of the land which is the immediate subject of his prophecy.

Humanity of Jeremiah      He used pictures he understood. When he wanted symbolic pictures, he drew upon his store of a nature lover's observations: "Yea, the stork in the heavens knoweth her appointed times; and the turtledove and the swallow and the crane observe the time of their coming."<sup>2</sup>

The greatest note of Jeremiah's humanity was his love. It showed itself in love for his God, to the extent that anyone opposing God's plan as Jeremiah saw it became his bitter enemy. He loved his Judah with a passionate tenderness that called forth his cry, "On that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!"<sup>3</sup> that reminds us of Jesus' "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that killeth the prophets, and stoneth them that are sent unto her! how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her own brood under her wings, and ye would not!"<sup>4</sup> He cries out in grief for the exiles from the Northern kingdom, "Oh, that I could comfort myself against sorrow! my heart is faint within me. Behold, the voice of the cry of the daughter of my people from

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<sup>1</sup> Jeremiah 7.34.

<sup>2</sup> Jeremiah 8.7.

<sup>3</sup> Jeremiah 9.1.

<sup>4</sup> Luke 13.34.





a land which is very far off....For the hurt of the daughter of my people am I hurt: I mourn; dismay hath taken hold on me."<sup>1</sup> Again and again he raises just such a lament for the condition of his people, crying out in dismay in the midst of his prophecies of inexorable destruction. He was intensely sensitive to human suffering, as witness his repeated use of the "pangs of a woman in travail" as a figure for the intense anguish to come upon Zion. We have already considered the possibility of his having known the love of a man for a woman.

Set over against this tenderness is his consciousness of a mission"to pluck up and to break down and to destroy and to overthrow." He must prophesy doom and destruction to a people whom he loved. "It is...worth noting that he cherished the noblest Humanity aspirations for his own people, and his heart was broken vs. Mission for its plight, while he scorched each son of Israel with the withering blast of God's fury. It is the inconsistency of the man. It is at once the failure and the glory of prophetic genius."<sup>2</sup> It was that conflict between his reluctance to throw himself into the public spotlight and become "traitor" to his nation and this sense of his that he had to do it, had to because God had called him to it, that led him to cry, "Woe is me, my mother, that thou hast borne me a man of strife and a man of contention to the whole earth!

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<sup>1</sup>Jeremiah 8.18-22.

<sup>2</sup>Gordon, The Rebel Prophet, 61.

a long while is very far off.... But the fact of the danger of my people as a whole I cannot always have taken into account. Again he refused that a lesson for the condition of his people, trying not to think in the light of his proposals of international relations. He was intensely sensitive to human suffering, as witness his repeated use of the "poor of a woman in travail" as a figure for the infinite anguish of some poor man. He knew already concerned the possibility of his having known the loss of a man for a woman.

But even against this testimony in his conversations of a mission to stand up and to speak from and to humanity and to "overcome". He was profoundly aware and sensitive to a people who he loved. His is... While noting that he understood the position of the people, especially for the poor people, and his heart was broken for the people. While he described with him of Israel with his thinking about the world's help. It is the responsibility of the man. It is to save the future and the glory of progress. It was that conflict between his resistance to know himself that the public attention and human "action" to his heart and soul. Some of his time he had to do it, and he began and was called to do it. And he had to do it, that is to say, by action, that man had to be a man of action and a man of conviction in the whole world.



I have not lent, neither have men lent to me; yet every one of them doth curse me."<sup>1</sup> He even dares to reproach Yahweh: "Why is my pain perpetual, and my wound incurable, which refuseth to be healed? wilt thou indeed be unto me as a deceitful brook, as waters that fail?"<sup>2</sup>

Indeed, this very struggle seems to have driven him for a time into retirement from his ministry, a retirement which he found himself unable to endure under the goad of his consciousness of God's use for him. He does not say, nor does his biographer say, that he actually did so, but in the following passage, his account of Yahweh's reply to him when he was pondering this situation, we see the reflection of it, and his conception of the conditions under which he would be allowed to take up once again his prophetic mission:

Therefore thus saith Jehovah, If thou return, then will I bring thee again, that thou mayest stand before me; and if thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth: they shall return unto thee, but thou shalt not return unto them. And I will make thee unto this people a fortified brazen wall; and they shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail against thee; for I am with thee to save thee and to deliver thee, saith Jehovah. And I will deliver thee out of the hand of the wicked, and I will redeem thee out of the hand of the terrible.<sup>3</sup>

Probably the best summary of his conflict is his own cry, "O Jehovah, thou has persuaded me, and I was persuaded; thou art stronger than I, and hast prevailed."<sup>4</sup>

Jeremiah was subject to the play of all the usual human

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<sup>1</sup>Jeremiah 15.10.

<sup>3</sup>Jeremiah 15.19-21.

<sup>2</sup>Jeremiah 15.18.

<sup>4</sup>Jeremiah 20.7.



emotions. He knew fear. Perhaps his greatest fear was his distrust of his own ability to measure up to his task. The glorious thing about him is his ability to overcome his fears through his faith in God. When Pashhur had him confined for his denunciation of the Temple, he must have been afraid for his fate, but he had the courage

His Emotions to fly in his captor's face and proclaim judgment against Pashhur himself. The prophet's anger is terrible. We find flashes of it in the prophecies where he denounces those who are the enemies of Yahweh, and therefore his enemies. Gordon<sup>1</sup> remarks the fact that, tender as he was to the nation as a whole even in his denunciations of her, he was terrible in his attacks upon individuals, which, he says, shows him to have been an idealist, who sometimes let his great ideas lead him too easily. It is the greatness of the prophet that he could love so passionately and hate so terribly, that he could plumb the depths of sorrow and despondency, even to temporary loss of faith, and then rise to the heights of joy and rapture in the hope for God's people.

A peculiar streak in Jeremiah's personality is his vengefulness. As he gradually <sup>became</sup> estranged from his friends through his prophetic activity, this showed itself more and more. When the men of Anathoth, his own friends, plotted to stop his prophesying or end his life, he sounded this terrible threat:

But, O Jehovah of hosts, who judgest righteously, who

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<sup>1</sup> Gordon, The Rebel Prophet, 61.





triest the heart and the mind, I shall see thy vengeance on them; for unto thee have I revealed my cause. Therefore thus saith Jehovah concerning the men of Anathoth, that seek thy life, saying, Thou shalt not prophesy in the name of Jehovah, that thou die not by our hand; therefore thus saith Jehovah of hosts, Behold, I will punish them: the young men shall die by the sword; their sons and their daughters shall die by famine; and there shall be no remnant unto them: for I will bring evil upon the men of Anathoth, even the year of their visitation.<sup>1</sup>

The weaker points of Jeremiah's character could not have stayed submerged at all times in the face of the trials which beset him. It was only his greatness that permitted him to overcome them at all. Dr. Longacre states his case thus:

It was by virtue of such high-souled bravery that Jeremiah was able to withstand isolation and persecution. His book offers no complete list of physical dangers into which he was forced, such as Paul gives in II Corinthians 11.24-27, but it reports at least two occasions when he was in danger of his life, Jeremiah, 11.18-20 and 26.8. He also had been placed in stocks, Jeremiah 20. Once he was imprisoned and left to die, Jeremiah 37.16-20, and at another time cast into a dungeon for the same fatal purpose, Jeremiah, 38.4-6. But none of these things moved him. Not only was his message searching and uncompromising, but his courage matched his message.<sup>2</sup>

Moreover, in spite of his personal sufferings and his conviction of doom for the nation, Jeremiah did not lose his hope. When we come to consider in more detail a comparison of Jeremiah's and Jesus' views of the future, we shall see how he held his hope. When we come to consider in more detail a comparison of Jeremiah's and Jesus' views of the future, we shall see how he held his hope to the end.

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<sup>1</sup> Jeremiah 11.18-23.

<sup>2</sup> Longacre, A Prophet of the Spirit, 37.





### Character Sketch of Jesus

It is with some trepidation that one attempts to characterize Jesus in the brief span of a few pages when there is a larger literature concerning him than any other man who ever lived. Moreover, theological speculation has so enshrouded the man Jesus in a mystic veil of divine personality, explained in endless ways, that it is difficult to separate his original characteristics from those attributed to him by worshipping followers. Even in the Gospels this is evident, especially when we compare the earlier with the later. It is possible, however, to disentangle a fairly clear conception of Jesus as he was.

I shall begin with a quotation from Workman's Jesus the Man and Christ the Spirit, which is found at the end of his chapter on the "Humanity":

He was a real man in the full sense of the term, like one of us, having feelings and affections akin to ours, and compassed with limitations similar to those which we have. He was constituted just as we are, and had the same physical nature, the same moral faculty, the same religious instinct, the same impulse to prayer, and the same desire for fellowship with God.

But he was also a prophetic teacher and a religious reformer whose personality was not a gift, but an achievement; and whose life of communion with God enabled him not only to obtain a perfect revelation of his will, but also to utter precepts that are of universal significance, and to proclaim principles that are of perpetual application, being suitable for people of every class, of every condition, and of every race.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Workman, Jesus the Man and Christ the Spirit, 80-81.

It is also worth mentioning that the following is  
concerning the death in the night of a few years ago there is  
a letter discussing something the same way other men have lived.  
However, the following question was so answered and has been in  
a short time of this journal, explained in various ways, and  
it is difficult to separate the original contributions from those  
attributed to him by subsequent followers. Even in the original  
this is evident, especially when we compare the earlier with the  
later. It is possible, however, to distinguish a fairly clear  
conception of how he was.

I shall begin with a quotation from someone's letter.

The man and his life, which is found at the end of his

chapter on the "Geometry".

It was a real man in the full sense of the word. He  
was of his, having feelings and emotions which he could not  
suppress with limitations which he knew were no more. He  
was concerned, not as we are, but as the great spiritual beings  
the great moral beings, the great religious beings, the great  
beings for progress, and the great beings for following the path  
but he was also a human being, a human being with a human  
nature whose personality was not a gift, but an achievement;  
and whose life of endeavor was not a mere aim and only an  
aim, a perfect realization of his will, but also to know  
progress and not of material progress, and to realize  
progressive and not of material progress, and to realize  
people of great ideas, of great conviction, and of great power.

However, James the man and his life, 1901.

I have pointed out that Jeremiah was in a continual state of conflict. Such was not the case with Jesus. He appears as a far more integrated personality than Jeremiah. We have just two times recorded when Jesus had to face a serious conflict within himself--in his Temptation experience and in the Gethsemane night.

At his baptism, Jesus had become clearly convinced of his Messiahship. After telling of his baptism, Mark has two terse verses: "And straightway the Spirit driveth him forth into the

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|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Periods of<br/><u>Conflict</u></p> | <p>wilderness. And he was in the wilderness forty days tempted of Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him."<sup>1</sup> Matthew<sup>2</sup> and Luke<sup>3</sup> give longer accounts of this temptation experience, naming three specific temptations: (a) to turn stones to bread and appease his hunger,</p>                                                    |
| <p>(a)<br/><u>Temptation</u></p>      | <p>(b) to cast himself from the pinnacle of the temple and depend upon the guardianship of the angels, (c) to have all the kingdoms of the world in exchange for worship of Satan. There have been many interpretations of these temptations. I believe the most nearly true interpretations are those which consider them as inward, spiritual experiences relating to Jesus' Messianic mission.</p> |

Gilbert<sup>4</sup> suggests that the first temptation was a temptation to test his assurance of his Messianic call, since it is stated, "If thou art the Son of God." Whether or not this particular

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<sup>1</sup> Mark 1.12-13.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. 4.1-11.

<sup>3</sup> Luke 4.1-13.

<sup>4</sup> Gilbert, Students' Life of Jesus, 63.





idea is correct, I believe the first temptation was personal, either in relation to Jesus' own assurance, or actually through desire to use his power to minister to his own material needs. The second was that of the attractive possibility of performing some spectacular act, such as casting himself from the topmost peak of the Temple and emerging unscathed, to secure the attention and following of the people. The third was the thought of bowing to the popular idea--regardless of whether or not Jesus was the only one at that time to have a different conception--of the Messiah as an earthly deliverer. He knew it would be a fairly simple matter to organize a strong following and rebel against Rome. On the other hand, he knew that he would have to bow to the opinions of rulers, priests, and people. It is this that he expresses as bowing down and worshipping Satan. Jesus resisted these temptations, however, for he was convinced that his Messianic mission was a spiritual one, which could only be hindered by bowing to the caprice of the people and turning from what he saw as the will of God. When the temptations were completed, according to Luke, "The devil...departed from him for a season."<sup>1</sup>

Some have held that there was no real conflict in these temptations, that they were mere suggestions that never actually appealed to Jesus. He was the only one who knew about them. Why, then, if they had not aroused conflict within him, did he tell his disciples about them, couching them in the symbolic terms we have

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<sup>1</sup>Luke 4.13.

also to express, I believe the first suggestion was proposed, either  
in relation to the 'the statement, or actually through feeling to  
and the power to influence to the two connected words. The second was  
that of the extensive possibility of gathering more information  
and, with an existing element from the second part of the people and  
something was added, to remove the statement and following of the  
people. The third was the thought of looking to the people from  
regardless of whether or not, which was the only one in that line to  
have a different suggestion and the fourth as an entirely different  
one that it would be a fairly simple matter to organize a series  
following and even against them. In the third part, the people  
we would want to have in the interest of others, political, and people.  
It is also that we express in looking down and something about  
them, without those fundamental, however, for we are convinced that  
the necessity of them was a different one, which again was the  
indicated by looking to the support of the people and looking down  
that we saw as the will of God. When we represented them that way,  
according to him, 'the people'... I suppose that was not a mistake.

Some have held that there was no real conflict in these  
fundamental, that they were mere suggestions that were not really  
appealed to them. He was the only one who was not that way.  
When, if they had not moved conflict, which was the only one  
disputed about them, according to the people's sense of law.



in the Gospel accounts? Luke gives the key to the question. The temptation was over only "for a season." It was real, and it was recurring. If Jesus had been so sure of his course, so sure of God's will, that there was no conflict involved when these ideas presented themselves, then there would have been no occasion for his going into the wilderness to work out his mission. Here it was not humanity at war with a sense of mission, as it was so often with Jeremian, but rather conflicting views of the mission itself. It is not to be supposed that Jesus never experienced other temptations, or even that he never experienced the same temptations again. When he spoke of the likelihood of his death before he went up to Jerusalem, "Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall never be unto thee. But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art a stumbling-block unto me."<sup>1</sup> By his very use of the term, "Satan," he recognizes the temptation here as similar to the other.

Indeed, we should note with Workman that "The New Testament writers knew nothing of a Jesus who could not be tempted."<sup>2</sup> In Hebrews 4.15 we read of Jesus, "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Paul, too, wrote of his temptation. This concept of Jesus' sinlessness brings

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<sup>1</sup> Matt. 16.22-23.

<sup>2</sup> Workman, Jesus the Man and Christ the Spirit, 70.



us to the point that he did not sin, not because he could not sin, but because "his fullness of the Spirit made sin repellent to him, and enabled him to resist every solicitation to do wrong."<sup>1</sup> It was his constant communion with God that gave him this fullness; it was this communion during the wilderness experience that enabled him to resist the temptations.

The other great period of conflict we know of in Jesus' life was that of Gethsemane. We do not know how many times before he had fought over the same problem of surrender to his

(b) mission and acceptance of death if necessary, for we Gethsemane have no record of what took place in his private prayer life. When he prayed in Gethsemane, "Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; remove this cup from me: Howbeit not what I will, but what thou wilt,"<sup>2</sup> it was not the prayer of one thoroughly given up to his fate. All three of the Synoptists represent him as being in mortal agony as he prayed. As his hour approached, he still found it hard to give himself up to death, even though he saw that it was inevitable. Klausner<sup>3</sup> says he was afraid of death, and adds that the "not what I will, but what thou wilt," is a spurious addition. We must allow here for a prejudiced viewpoint, even as we must be careful not to prejudice our own. Perhaps he did have some fear of death. Perhaps, as Gilbert suggests,<sup>4</sup> he feared for his friends and was in anguish because of his love for them. At any rate,

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<sup>1</sup> Workman, Jesus the Man and Christ the Spirit, 71. <sup>2</sup>Mk. 14.36.

<sup>3</sup> Klausner, Life of Jesus, 331.

<sup>4</sup> Gilbert, Students' Life of Jesus, 273.





it was a terrific conflict going on within him that called forth that prayer, and if Matthew and Mark are correct in their accounts, it was not only once, but three times that he prayed in the same vein. The first resignation was not enough, but again his close communion with God won the way through his difficulty and he was enabled to meet his fate with a calm and high courage.

In these Temptation and Gethsemane experiences we can see something of a parallel to the "Confessions" of Jeremiah. Perhaps the closest to the Temptations is Jeremiah's cry, "Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper? Wherefore are all they at ease that deal very treacherously?...But thou, O Jehovah, knowest me; thou seest me, and triest my heart toward thee."<sup>1</sup> Elsewhere is the outcry already quoted in another connection, "Woe is me, my mother, that thou hast borne me a man of strife and a man of contention to the whole earth!"<sup>2</sup> Jeremiah cries out in protest here against the difficulty of his mission; in Gethsemane Jesus cries out for relief from his. Both afterward realize their dependence upon God. Similar is the passage wherein Jeremiah curses the day he was born, and says, "Wherefore came I forth out of the womb to see labor and sorrow, that my days should be consumed with shame?"<sup>3</sup> Both men were severely tried, but both rose to their greatest heights of trust in God as an immediate outgrowth of these testings.

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<sup>1</sup> Jeremiah 12.1-3.

<sup>2</sup> Jeremiah 15.10.

<sup>3</sup> Jeremiah 20.18.





We do not, however, find the conflict throughout Jesus' life that we find in Jeremiah's. Perhaps one reason is that his conception of his mission was different from that of Jeremiah. The two men were strikingly alike in many characteristics. Klausner<sup>1</sup> points to the self-confidence of Jesus, exhibited in such statements as "It was said to you by them of olden time....but I say unto you." This is a parallel to the prophet's certainty with which he uses the familiar "Jehovah saith unto me," or "Thus saith Jehovah." We have, too, the contradiction in Jeremiah of his tender heart beside his prophecies of destruction and terrible threats against the nation; in Jesus we have the contradiction of this self-confidence mentioned above and his humbleness and gentleness so often displayed.

The great note of Jeremiah's humanity was his love. In exactly the same respect, Jesus is most human at exactly the same point where he approaches super-humanity. Jesus, like Jeremiah, loved Humanity his God, loved him so as to conceive him as a Father who of Jesus; LOVE loved all his children and watched over them with tenderest care. He loved his people, as shown in his lament over Jerusalem's indifference already quoted. Perhaps he had known the love of a woman; we cannot know with certainty. We do know, however, that he loved individuals as no one else has loved. Beggars, diseased persons, rich men, publicans, beautiful women, children--all were brothers and sisters to him, and he gave himself whole-heartedly to them. His "New

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<sup>1</sup> Klausner, Life of Jesus, 409.

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Commandment" to his disciples was "That ye love one another, even as I have loved you."<sup>1</sup>

Jesus, too, was subject to the play of human emotions. As he could love people, just as strongly could he hate evil in all its forms. He was so familiar with sorrow as to have earned the title of "Man of Sorrows," yet he knew joy so as to promise His Emotions his joy and peace to his disciples. Apparently he knew fear. It is his strength that he learned to overcome his fear through dependence upon his Father. His anger burst into raging flame when he found the money-changers in the Temple, until he was impelled to cast them out by force. His sympathy knew no bounds. Indeed, there is almost a feminine tenderness about both Jesus and Jeremiah. Klausner<sup>2</sup> says that he was indulgent and forgiving toward his disciples, while he could be harsh and unbending in his attitude toward the Pharisees and others.

There is a point where Jeremiah is left far behind. We have taken note of his vengefulness. There was no such thing in Jesus. Where Jeremiah complained of the attacks made upon him and prayed for punishment upon his enemies, Jesus never complained. Where Jeremiah hurled a prophecy of destruction into the teeth of Pashhur when he put the prophet in the stocks, Jesus took the mockery of his tormentors without a murmur. He was even able to pray on the cross, "Father,

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<sup>1</sup> John 15.12.

<sup>2</sup> Klausner, Life of Jesus, 410.



commitment" to his disciples was "That ye love one another, even

as I have loved you."

Jesus, then, was subject to the play of human emotions.

As he could love people, just as intensely could he love will to will

the Father. He was no idealist who refused to be moved by the will of

the Father of Love, but he loved the Father as he loved the Father.

His joy and peace in his disciples, especially in John

the Evangelist, were the fruit of his love for the Father and the

disciples. His joy was not a mere feeling, but a deep, abiding

conviction that the Father's love was the source of all life and

peace. His joy was not a mere feeling, but a deep, abiding

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forgive them, for they know not what they do,"<sup>1</sup> an attitude so incomprehensible to Klausner that he denies<sup>2</sup> that Jesus ever said it, apparently forgetting that practically the same words are attributed to Stephen when he was being stoned.<sup>3</sup>

Jesus' love surpassed Jeremiah's in that Jeremiah appears to have practically exhausted his love upon the ideal nation and upon his God, while Jesus poured out his love upon individuals as well as upon these.

Both are a mixture of mystic faith, each feeling that God is his sure defense, and practical prudence. When Baruch was warned to hide himself and Jeremiah after reading the roll, Jeremiah prudently hid himself. He did not fear to stand before the king and denounce him to his face, but he prudently had himself kept in the court of the guard even after he was released from prison, thereby probably saving his life. Jesus boldly stormed the Temple, but every night of the Passion Week he went out to Bethany rather than stay in Jerusalem and take needless risk, and arranged to eat the meal before the Passover in secret. On more than one occasion he refused to take certain steps because he felt that his hour was not yet come.

I have mentioned that Jeremiah had hope in the midst of his pessimism, hope for the future of the nation. He had no hope for a future life. It was here that Jesus stepped on ahead, speaking

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<sup>1</sup> Luke 23.34.

<sup>2</sup> Klausner, Life of Jesus, 352.

<sup>3</sup> Acts 7.60: "Father, lay not this sin to their charge."





confidently of a life to come where the good of earth would be rewarded, even going so far as to say certain things about its nature.

At the outset of this character comparison, I said that Jesus did not have the conflict between his humanity and his sense of mission that Jeremiah had. It was not because he was less human. We have seen that just the opposite is the case--that he is fully as human as the prophet. It is rather because his sense of mission was different. Jeremiah had come to proclaim destruction upon nation and individual, with only the hope of a future restoration of the nation to mitigate the severity of his prophecy. Jesus felt himself called as the savior of men, one who should point the way to happiness and peace, should bring the Kingdom of God on earth. The more tenderness he felt the more it should have fitted with his mission. Jeremiah had difficulty adjusting himself to what he saw clearly as the will of God for his life. Jesus apparently never held back from assuming his responsibility seen in the same way. Even at the end, when he prayed that the cup might pass from him, it was not a recoil from his mission, but a plea that there might be some other way of realizing it. Further, when Jesus felt obliged to prophesy disaster upon the city and the temple, he could look to the future life for the welfare of those worthy to enter, while Jeremiah could look only to undeserved destruction for them.



Both were of necessity lonely spirits. Cast off by his family, the prophet had only Baruch close by him for much of his life. He dwelt in a spiritual realm alone. Jesus was likewise cast off by his family for a time, though they appear to have believed in him in his later ministry. Even with his twelve chosen disciples he was a lonely soul. They lacked the capacity to reach his heights. When he underwent the greatest trials of his life he had to be alone. Yet neither was alone, for each had a communion with God that made up for any other lacks. What can we say of their religious experience?

#### Personal Religion of Jeremiah and Jesus

One of the dominant notes in Jeremiah's personal religion is that of submission to the will of his God. Welch<sup>1</sup> in particular points out the importance of this element in the prophet, but it is evident in the many passages we have relating to the man's inner life in his book. There is a mystical side to this submission. Indeed, there is a good deal of the mystic evident in Jeremiah, enough to prompt Gordon to write a whole chapter on the subject.<sup>2</sup> He bases his discussion upon the four characteristics of a true mystic suggested by William James. They are:

1. A sense of ineffability. This Jeremiah possessed strongly, feeling the tremendous, incomprehensible power and love of Yahweh,

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<sup>1</sup> Welch, Jeremiah, 60.

<sup>2</sup> Gordon, The Rebel Prophet, Ch. VII: "The Prophet as a Mystic".





something beyond him, drawing him, persuading, possessing him.

Practically the same could be said of Jesus, though perhaps to him the power and love of God were not so incomprehensible. It is hard to say whether such statements as "No one knoweth the Son, save the Father; neither doth any know the Father, save the Son"<sup>1</sup> are actually from Jesus or later interpretations by the writers. Certainly he felt possessed and drawn by God's power and love, for he told the disciples that he did as the Father commanded him.

## 2. A knowledge of the outcome of the mystical experience.

Jeremiah was stronger in this respect than many mystics, for he not only knew where his mystical experiences led him but he followed them out to the logical end, a course in which he was aided by the fact that his mystical experiences were not of the cataclysmic variety.

Again we find a similarity in the experience of Jesus. He, too, grew into his experiences. When he had his mystical experience at his baptism in the Jordan, he did not hesitate to accept the call he then felt to the Messiahship. In following this experience to the end he found a Cross there.

## 3. Visions and Voices.

Jeremiah felt that he had had visions. Indeed, he records two of them, those of the almond rod and the boiling cauldron, in his account of his call and commission. Throughout his life he heard the voice of God in his inner life; he listened to it; he even dared to argue with it.

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<sup>1</sup> Matthew 11.27.





In the case of Jesus we have the baptismal vision and the vision at the transfiguration.<sup>1</sup> How many other times he felt that he had come into visual contact with God or his emissaries we cannot know, but we do know that he felt that God communicated directly with him. When he heard the voice in the two visions just mentioned, it is only natural to suppose that in his lonely meditations he seemed to hear the voice of God. Certainly he felt that he knew what God wanted.

4. Passivity. Jeremiah's passivity was not that of the mystic who loses his whole personality in the wide sweep of his experience and gives himself up to the ecstasies of a direct communion, approaching the Buddhistic ideal of attainment of Nirvana. His was the passivity of acceptance of Yahweh's will, but only after he had assimilated it into his own personality, which he never lost, through careful thought and not a little struggle in many instances.

This is precisely what we have been at some pains to show in regard to Jesus in the section above. Jesus accepted God's will for himself, but he, too, always retained his personality.

On the basis of these four criteria, we may conclude that both Jeremiah and Jesus qualify as mystics, but we must remember that ecstatic experience had small part in either's validation of his faith. They relied rather on intuition, intuition born of constant communion with God. As Skinner says:

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<sup>1</sup> Matt. 17.1-8; Mark 9.208; Luke 9.28-36.



Now this second form of inspiration may be said to be the vanishing point of the prophetic consciousness, where it shakes off the last remnant of subconscious thought, which had served its purpose in the providential education of the people of religion, and gives place to what had always been the spiritual essence of true prophecy--the intuitive certainty of divine truth, and the illumination of the whole conscious mind by the Spirit of God.<sup>1</sup>

There are certain characteristics of the personal religion of these two men that we cannot fail to note. First is their individualism. Jeremiah felt himself cut off from the religious fellowship of men, as one standing for Yahweh against a whole people. We see this attitude mirrored in:

O Jehovah, thou knowest; remember me, and visit me, and avenge me of my persecutors; take me not away in thy longsuffering: know that for thy sake I have suffered reproach. Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy words were unto me a joy and the rejoicing of my heart; for I am called by thy name, O Jehovah, God of hosts. I sat not in the assembly of them that make merry nor rejoiced; I sat alone because of thy hand; for thou hast filled me with indignation.<sup>2</sup>

It blazes forth in the closely following verse:

And I will make thee unto this people a fortified brazen wall; and they shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail against thee; for I am with thee to save thee and to deliver thee, saith Jehovah.<sup>3</sup>

We see it again and again in his prayers for protection from his persecutors, for surcease from his trials, and in his general prophetic consciousness of mission to his people.

It should hardly be necessary to stress this point in the case of Jesus. His very conception of himself as the Messiah

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<sup>1</sup> Skinner, Prophesy and Religion, 222. Italics mine.

<sup>2</sup> Jeremiah 15.15-17.

<sup>3</sup> Jeremiah 15.20.





would set him far apart from men. Wherever we find his Messianic consciousness showing itself, we have evidence of his individualism. Moreover, we have it exhibited in such sayings as, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now."<sup>1</sup>

A second characteristic of Jeremiah's religion, which is the basis for his individualism and for his message to Judah, is his trust in the unerring righteousness of God. Jeremiah is convinced of his own moral integrity; being so, he can postulate no less for his God. As a single instance:

Give heed to me, O Jehovah, and hearken to the voice of them that contend with me. Shall evil be recompensed for good? for they have digged a pit for my soul. Remember how I stood before thee to speak good for them, to turn away thy wrath from them. Therefore deliver up their children to the famine, and give them over to the power of the sword, etc.<sup>2</sup>

It is this sense of the righteousness of God that leads Jeremiah to reject the idea of intercessory prayer for lost Judah. Earlier he had tried to pray so, but he was forced to the conclusion that the people had strayed so far away that Jehovah could not righteously pardon them. There was more than this, however, in Jeremiah's God. Lofthouse says the key to Jeremiah is in the conception of Yahweh not as a mere God of Law, but with first thought for the "answer which warm personal affection longs for from its object."<sup>3</sup> This is the heart of his thought in the earlier prophecies when he dwells upon Judah's similarity to the unfaithful wife who deserts her loving

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<sup>1</sup>John 16.12.

<sup>3</sup>Lofthouse, Jeremiah, 48.

<sup>2</sup>Jeremiah 18.19-21a.





spouse; it is at the foundation of his rejection of sacerdotalism, ritual, and the loose religious practices. Jeremiah himself had attained to love of his God, the realization that He was a God for the individual. As he goes through his career his message gradually shifts from the address to the nation to "ye men of Israel" and finally becomes addressed to individuals. Jeremiah has been called "the prophet of individualism" and the "prophet of personal piety" and other names, all indications of this tendency in his teaching. It is the first time that the individual interpretation of the requirements of Jehovah is clearly stated. Amos had preached the righteousness of Yahweh and his demand for righteousness from his people, but when they failed in their part of the bargain, he saw little if any hope for them. Hosea saw further into God's nature to see the Divine Love, and had some idea of the possibility of repentance, but Jeremiah began there: "If thou wilt return, O Israel, saith the Lord, return unto me: and if thou wilt put away thine abominations out of my sight, then shalt thou not remove. And thou shalt swear, The Lord liveth, in truth, in judgment, and in righteousness; and the nations shall bless themselves in him, and in him shall they glory. For thus saith the Lord to the men of Judah and Jerusalem, Break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns."<sup>1</sup> With religion put first, for Jeremiah the relationship between God and man, if rightly formed, would solve all the problems of life. He tried forever to

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<sup>1</sup>Jeremiah 4.1-4.



convince the people of their wrong, but "Though he sowed the most fruitful seeds of Israel's religion, none sprang up in his life time. For his own generation he built nothing."<sup>1</sup>

Jesus' religion might be summed up as an individual religion with inescapable social implications. He began where Jeremiah ended. The conception of the nation apart from the individuals in it seems not to have existed for him. He began with the individual: "Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them."<sup>2</sup> God for Jesus is not a God of inexorable righteous judgment, but rather a God whose righteousness is tempered with loving forgiveness. In His eyes the repentance of the sinner is sufficient to offset the fatal guilt of the sins. Jesus could forgive others himself; he could not think less of his God. His requirements are to be summed up much as Micah did: justice, kindness (love), and walking humbly with God (faith). Love is the key word in the religion of Jesus. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength," and "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." These are not new conceptions, but it was the peculiar contribution of Jesus, out of his own experience, to bring them together and isolate them from the mass of Old Testament accretions. "He approved of religion only as it manifested itself in moral action."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Smith, G.A., Jeremiah, 320.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. 7.12.

<sup>3</sup> Workman, Jesus the Man, 136.





Jeremiah was original in the exercise of prayer.

Dr. Skinner says<sup>1</sup> that he learned through intercessory prayer to pray for himself. We find his attempts in his earlier days to pray for his people to stay the wrath he was sure was imminent, but he Prayer gradually reached the conclusion that such intercession was useless. But Jeremiah came through these prayers into a very high type of prayer life, wherein he not only prayed for the nation and prayed for help for himself, as we have seen in his prayers for destruction of his enemies and his cries for strength, but where he reasoned out with God all his conflicts. God was so real to him that his prayer life was a constant communion. He asked for open rewards in many cases, praying for help and for healing. He questioned God over and over again. He rose to heights in unselfish intercession for his beloved people. His chief prayers may be found in chapters 12, 14, 15, 17, 18, 20, and 32. One of the finest is the following, for its first half, though the latter half shades off into a lower spirit:

O Jehovah, I know that the way of man is not in himself, it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. O Jehovah, correct me, but in measure; not in thine anger, lest thou bring me to nothing. Pour out thy wrath upon the nations that know thee not, and upon the families that call not on thy name; for they have devoured Jacob, yea, they have devoured him and consumed him, and have laid waste his habitation.<sup>2</sup>

Here is shown the dependence of the prophet upon his God, and at the same time his vengefulness upon the enemies of himself and his people.

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<sup>1</sup>Skinner, Prophecy and Religion, 227.

<sup>2</sup>Jeremiah 10.23-25.





All who were not for God were Jeremiah's enemies. Skinner names three stages on the "ladder of prayer," as related to the evolution of religion. He says:

The lowest is that of petition for the fulfillment of some particular desire or the removal of some external evil, solely in the interest of the individual himself. Such prayer is common to every known form and phase of religion. The second stage is that on which Jeremiah enters. Here prayer is the effort to bring every thought and feeling into harmony with the will of God, and to find its true good in being right with Him. Although it is neither selfish nor self-centred, it contains a certain residuum of self-will--an unresolved difference of the two wills, arising from the man's inability to conceive that what he deems to be necessary for his good can possibly be other than what God wills that he should have; In Jeremiah's case the overthrow of his enemies. There is a third stage, to which perhaps he hardly attains, where the thought of self is entirely lost, and the mind surrenders itself wholly to the divine will as that which alone is truly good. 'Father, not my will but Thine be done.'<sup>1</sup>

It is precisely to this third step that the prayer-life of Jesus came, as suggested by the quotation of his own prayer. Prayer was his constant source of strength. This man was continually going off into the desert places to be alone with God in prayer. Mark 1.35, 6.46, 14.35, and Luke 3.21, 6.12, 9.18, 28, 11.1, as well as other places, show him feeling the need of prayer. At the times of his greatest testing, as we have seen, it was to God in prayer that he learned to go for the necessary strength for his responsibility. But his prayer was not confined to Prayer for himself. He prayed for his disciples, even interceded on behalf of those who crucified him.<sup>2</sup>

Jeremiah and Jesus are alike--what enduringly great

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<sup>1</sup>Skinner, Prophecy and Religion, 228.



religious leaders are not so?--in that each found his major source of strength in prayer. Perhaps they two reached higher than any others before ~~them~~ or since their time. Certainly Jesus did. Since Jeremiah rose higher than any before him, it would not be at all impertinent to say that Jesus may have received some of the inspirations for his own prayer life from a study of that of Jeremiah, though if he did, the pupil surpassed the master.

The chief limitations of Jeremiah's religion root in ~~the~~ fact that the spirit of love, powerful in him as it was, had incomplete possession of him. He felt the love of God for the nation, and he felt his communion with him for himself, but he seems not to have attained to the thought of God's love for him as a Father, which was the great bulk of Jesus' God-consciousness. Jeremiah himself fell short in his feeling toward his persecutors, for he failed to find love in his heart for them. His religion is optimistic in spite of his message of doom, for he fully believed in the efficacy of repentance, and tried to the end to urge people to it. This sense of repentance furnishes the moral backbone for his religion, which he bases upon the character of God as all-seeing and interested in the individual. When Jesus went beyond this to knowing God as loving the individual, he went beyond Jeremiah's hope for the future to a confidence not only of a future for the nation in some bright day when he should come again, but also of a future happy life for all who should follow him.





## CHAPTER IV

## COMPARISON OF ESSENTIAL ATTITUDES AND TEACHINGS

We have found much similarity in the training of Jeremiah and Jesus; we have found considerable similarity in their characters and personal religion. With this background, we should naturally expect to find some similarity in essential attitudes and teachings, nor are we disappointed, for there are several major attitudes that are decidedly comparable.

In the days of Jeremiah the Law had not reached the stage of intricacy that characterized it by the time of Jesus. There were the two great versions of the Hebrew History, which we know as J and E; perhaps they were already largely combined. In these were the essentials of the Mosaic Code, though the Priestly Codification did not come until some time later. When

Attitude      the essentials of the Mosaic Code, though the Priestly  
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The Law      Codification did not come until some time later. When

Jeremiah was yet a young man, in 621 B.C., a new book of the Law, Deuteronomy, had been discovered in the Temple and immediately put in force through the efforts of Josiah. Men were hailing it as a great institutional reformation. As we have seen, however, Jeremiah at first supported it, probably largely because of its warfare against the high places and the pagan worship that had crept into Yahweh's worship, but soon became disillusioned. All of this literature was, of course, in the hands of the priests. "The prestige of the Torah

CHAPTER IV  
THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES

It was from this country in the middle of  
the last century that the first settlers  
came to the United States. At that time  
the country was almost entirely  
unexplored, and the first settlers  
were the Pilgrims, who came to the  
United States in 1620.

The first of these was the Pilgrim  
settlement, which was founded in 1620.  
The second was the Massachusetts  
settlement, which was founded in 1630.  
The third was the New England  
settlement, which was founded in 1633.  
The fourth was the Virginia  
settlement, which was founded in 1607.  
The fifth was the Maryland  
settlement, which was founded in 1634.  
The sixth was the Delaware  
settlement, which was founded in 1639.  
The seventh was the Pennsylvania  
settlement, which was founded in 1681.  
The eighth was the New York  
settlement, which was founded in 1614.  
The ninth was the New Jersey  
settlement, which was founded in 1666.  
The tenth was the New Hampshire  
settlement, which was founded in 1776.  
The eleventh was the Vermont  
settlement, which was founded in 1777.  
The twelfth was the New Brunswick  
settlement, which was founded in 1784.  
The thirteenth was the Nova Scotia  
settlement, which was founded in 1784.  
The fourteenth was the Prince Edward  
Island settlement, which was founded in 1784.  
The fifteenth was the Cape Breton  
settlement, which was founded in 1784.  
The sixteenth was the St. John's  
settlement, which was founded in 1784.  
The seventeenth was the Miramichi  
settlement, which was founded in 1784.  
The eighteenth was the Saguenay  
settlement, which was founded in 1784.  
The nineteenth was the Gaspé  
settlement, which was founded in 1784.  
The twentieth was the Antigonish  
settlement, which was founded in 1784.



must have mounted very high, until the protagonists of the status quo felt it an honour to be on the side of the Law.<sup>1</sup>

Jeremiah could not see it so. In his eyes the Law had merely become the basis for presumption. Even with the new reforms people were still able to render lip service to the Law and go on their sinful ways. It had become merely "another bulwark of priestcraft," another barrier between God and the soul; indeed, as a spiritual asset the Torah was a snare and a delusion.<sup>2</sup> Finally he burst out with a terrible indictment of the priests as he disparaged the Law:

How do ye say, We are wise, and the law of Jehovah is with us? But, behold, the false pen of the scribes hath wrought falsely. The wise men are put to shame, they are dismayed and taken: lo, they have rejected the word of Jehovah; and what manner of wisdom is in them?<sup>2</sup>

This was not so much an attack upon the fundamentals of the Law itself as upon the priestly twists that had been put upon it. How could any one trust in a law that had been tampered with? Since the Law had become the mere instrument of the priests, Jeremiah attacked it both as false and as unnecessary, especially in the ordinances we shall consider below, though he did not call into question its fundamental basis.

By the time of Jesus the Law consisted of the old documents, a Deuteronomic revision, and the Priestly Code with all its intricate provisions. Besides this there was the Oral Law,

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<sup>1</sup> Gordon, The Rebel Prophet, 102.

<sup>2</sup> Jeremiah 8.8-9.

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consisting of the interpretations and additions of the Rabbis' teaching, especially in Jerusalem, and the traditional written law, the "Tradition of the elders."<sup>1</sup> The legalistic tendency was dominant in Judaism of that time. Jesus came representing the prophetic tendency. Like Jeremiah, he did not attack the fundamental basis of the Law, for he saw beyond the maze of external intricacies to the great principles which they masked. We often look upon Jesus as setting aside the Law, bringing a new dispensation which did away with it, indeed, as attacking it directly. We are probably led to this in part by Paul's writings upon the Law, for instance, in the letter to the Romans, where he has his classic discussion of the Law as able only to condemn a man to sin; at the same time we overlook such statements of his as, "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; that the ordinance of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."<sup>2</sup> "We look at Jesus' "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath"<sup>3</sup> and say that he abrogated the Sabbath laws. On the contrary he simply stripped the great Sabbath law of its trappings and went to the basis of it. We look at his answer to the question on divorce: "And they said, Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put her away. But Jesus said unto them, For your hardness of heart he wrote you this commandment. But from the beginning of creation,

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<sup>1</sup> Klausner, Life of Jesus, 16.

<sup>2</sup> Romans 7.3-4.

<sup>3</sup> Mark 2.27.





Male and female made he them,"<sup>1</sup> etc. I say we look at this answer and tell ourselves that Jesus was setting aside the Law for a new law of his own. We forget that he is justifying Moses for having lessened the natural marriage requirements because of the roughness of the times. We forget that he is quoting Genesis 1.27 and 5.2 in his answer, and that Genesis was one of the books of the Pentateuch. Once more he is simply going back to the basis of the Law.

The above are two examples of Jesus' attitude toward the Law. This attitude is well expressed in the following paragraph:

He regarded the Old Testament quite differently from the men of his time. With them it meant an outer word--a body of rules, commandments, and prohibitions, enjoining and forbidding certain specific acts; for him the Old Testament meant the purpose of God as disclosed in Israel's history--the voice of God which spoke to the heart and the conscience through lawgiver and prophet....He neither sided with the technically religious or orthodox Pharisees, nor did he attack the law because of the perversions and superficial interpretations of it which were current. His method was that of penetrating to the real essence of the law; it was the method of comprehension by which he was able to grasp into the unity of a great spiritual principle the essence of all commandments, as when he taught that love to God and man is the substance of all that the law and the prophets contained (Matt. 22.37-40).<sup>2</sup>

As Holtzmann points out,<sup>3</sup> Jesus preserves complete independence of judgment in regard to the Old Testament Law, a judgment by which, without rejecting the law itself, he sifted and evaluated the individual precepts.

Closely related to the general attitude toward the Law

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<sup>1</sup>Mark 10.4-6.      <sup>2</sup>Stevens, Teaching of Jesus, 50.

<sup>3</sup>Holtzmann, Life of Jesus, 96.





is that toward its paraphernalia. With Jeremiah, sacrifice goes by the boards, and of course the ritual involved in it: "Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, the God of Israel: Add your burnt-offerings unto your sacrifices, and eat ye flesh. For I spake not unto your fathers, Priestcraft, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt-offerings and Ritual, out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt-offerings and Sacrifice or sacrifices: but this I commanded them, saying, Harken unto my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people; and walk ye in all the way that I command you, that all may be well with you."<sup>1</sup> With this stroke he cut the ground from under the feet of those who sponsored the sacrificial system of worship. This was not his only line of attack. "Hear, O earth: behold, I will bring evil upon the people, even the fruit of their thoughts, because they have not hearkened unto my words; and as for my law, they have rejected it. To what purpose cometh there to me frankincense from Sheba, and the sweet cane from a far country? your burnt-offerings are not acceptable, nor your sacrifices pleasing unto me."<sup>2</sup> Sacrifices are not only not commanded, but with moral rottenness within, "the fruit of their thoughts," sacrifice could have no value whatsoever.

Jesus is twice reported<sup>3</sup> as quoting Hosea's phrase, "I will have mercy and not sacrifice," which was probably the key idea in his thought on sacrifice and the ritualistic-legal system in general.

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<sup>1</sup> Jeremiah 21-23.

<sup>2</sup> Jeremiah 6.19-20.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. 9.13 and 12.7.



Otherwise, most of his opposition to the system is to be found in his silence upon it in a time when the most minute restrictions and observances were demanded. As Stevens suggests, "The world in which he lived and that of Jewish ceremonialism scarcely touched each other. The words which represented the religious ideals of his age were such as sacrifice, fasting, tithes, and almsgiving, while his were judgment, mercy, and the love of God, and after surveying the painstaking piety of his contemporaries and their zeal in legal obedience, he said plainly to his disciples, 'Except your righteousness shall exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven (Mt. 5.20)!"<sup>1</sup> He seems to have recognized the sacrificial system, at least to the extent of recognizing gifts to the Temple, for this is the least the words can mean, when he said, "If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift."<sup>2</sup> At the same time it is clear that he was insisting, just as Jeremiah had, that there could be no sacrifice without virtue as its basis.

The sacrifices of Jesus' day, the ritual of his day, were far more elaborate than those of Jeremiah's day, but both men seem to have taken essentially the same attitude on the subject.

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<sup>1</sup> Stevens, Teaching of Jesus, 52-53.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. 5.23-24.





On the same grounds that he discards sacrifice, Jeremiah discards the Ark of the Covenant, that most sacred object of all the Temple, around which the traditions of the centuries had gathered, supposed to contain the two tables of stone with the Commandments Jehovah had give to Moses.<sup>1</sup> Jeremiah simply says, "They shall say no more, The ark of the covenant of Jehovah; neither shall it come to mind; neither shall they remember it; neither shall they miss it; neither shall it be made any more. At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of Jehovah; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of Jehovah, to Jerusalem."<sup>2</sup> There is no equivocation in that statement! The ark is a symbol of priest-craft, which is unnecessary if personal religion is at hand in Jeremiah's thought.

Jeremiah goes farther, however, and attacks the priests themselves. He accuses them of turning away from Yahweh, of falsehood and chicanery, of conniving with the false prophets to keep their rule, of exploiting the worshippers for money, and of pretending that all is well and prosperous with the nation, "saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace."<sup>3</sup> This is but a partial list.

In Jesus' day the priestly class had expanded into the priests, the scribes, the Pharisees, and the Sadducees. Though much more complicated in small points, their standpoints were practically

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<sup>1</sup> I Kings 8.9.

<sup>2</sup> Jeremiah 3.16b-17.

<sup>3</sup> Jeremiah 2.8; 6.13; 5.31; 8.10; 8.11.





the same as in the days of Jeremiah. Jesus had no ark to discard. He did, however, attack the Pharisees and scribes in terms every whit as strong as those Jeremiah had used of the priests. Matthew 23.13-35 is composed of his woes upon them, with such accusations as: "Ye shut the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye enter not in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering in to enter."<sup>1</sup> "Ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he is become so, ye make him twofold more a son of hell than yourselves."<sup>2</sup> "Ye tithe mint and anise and cummin, and have left undone the weightier matters of the law, justice, and mercy, and faith...Ye blind guides, that strain out the gnat, and swallow the camel!"<sup>3</sup> "Ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but inwardly ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity."<sup>4</sup> It is apparent that toward those who took the same place in the legalism of his day, Jesus' attitude was essentially the same as that of Jeremiah toward the priests. Is it any wonder that those they attacked "took counsel that they might kill" them?

We have seen before that both Jeremiah and Jesus pronounced doom upon the Temple, both for the abuses that took place there. Jeremiah said, "Trust not in lying words, saying, The Temple The temple of Jehovah, the temple of Jehovah, the temple of Jehovah, are these. For if ye thoroughly amend your ways and your doings; if ye thoroughly execute justice between a man and his neighbor; if ye oppress not the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow, and

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<sup>1,2,3,4</sup> Matthew 23.13, 15, 23-24, 28.



shed not innocent blood in this place, neither walk after other gods to your own hurt: then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers, from of old even for evermore."<sup>1</sup> He is plainly saying the Temple is unnecessary. He was striking back at the tendency to centralize all the worship at Jerusalem, and make it the only place where Yahweh could be worshipped. The argument from silence is never conclusive, but we may infer from the silence of Jesus after pronouncing doom upon the Temple, that he felt no sense of loss in his certainty that it was to go down to destruction. It is an interesting fact that Jeremiah saw the doom of the Temple that he had prophesied, and that Jesus would not have had to live to an abnormally old age to have seen the doom he prophesied come to pass.

One of Isaiah's cardinal doctrines had been that of the inviolability of Zion,<sup>2</sup> but neither Jeremiah nor Jesus could agree with him here. Jeremiah stood in the very streets of Jerusalem, and in the Jerusalem gate of the Temple, and pronounced doom upon the city.

Jesus, too, prophesied doom upon the city, with a note of wistfulness at the same time: "And when he drew nigh, he saw the city and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known in this day, even thou, the things which belong unto peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, when thine enemies shall cast up a bank about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee

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<sup>1</sup>Jeremiah 7.4-7.

<sup>2</sup>Isaiah 37.35.





in on every side, and shall dash thee to the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation."<sup>1</sup>

In Jeremiah's thought, however, Jerusalem was to be restored along with shattered Judah in the future days after the exile was over. He looks to a restoration of the political state of Judah, and of Israel as well, with Jerusalem as the center. Jesus includes Jerusalem in the catastrophe that is to overtake all the nations at the end of the world, and does not mention her specifically in his apocalyptic thought. Redemption in that day is rather to be an individual redemption.

In the section on the personal religion of Jeremiah and Jesus we saw the most important points in their attitude towards personal religious experience. It was because their attitudes were what they were that they viewed the Torah, the Temple, ritual and sacrifice, etc., as they did. All these become unnecessary when religion is "an affair of the heart," as Jefferson summarizes Jeremiah's point of view. He says, "He became convinced that animal sacrifices are not essential to religion....Not even the ark is necessary....Not even the Temple is necessary....Even the Tables of the Law are not indispensable to religion....The City of Jerusalem is not essential to the prosperity of religion...Nor is the Jewish nation essential to the survival of true religion....He

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<sup>1</sup> Luke 19.41-44.





does not hesitate to say that true religion cannot be linked indissolubly with any tradition or any custom or any institution or any city or any nation or any people. Religion is an affair of the heart, and therefore cannot be obliterated."<sup>1</sup>

Speaking then of these very things which the Jews considered indispensable, Jefferson goes on to say, "But a new interpretation of religion arrived, and all these things considered indispensable were forthwith discarded. The altar was abandoned, the sacrifices ceased, there was no longer any officiating priesthood, and religious people met for worship not in a temple but in private homes. And yet religion went on, and not only went on but went up."<sup>2</sup> This was the interpretation of Jesus. With him, too, religion was an affair of the heart.

Jeremiah reached the high point of his prophecy when he brought forth his great New Covenant:

I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know Jehovah; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith Jehovah: for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more.<sup>3</sup>

Knowledge of God for Jeremiah involved love of God.

Jesus carried on this ideal. For him the greatest commandment was "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength."

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<sup>1</sup> Jefferson, Cardinal Ideas of Jeremiah, 58-62. <sup>2</sup> Ibid., 63.

<sup>3</sup> Jeremiah 31.33-34.



The second was, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." In these could be included his "justice, mercy, faith," and love. As with Jeremiah, repentance was his first requirement, the opening of his message, "Repent ye, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand."<sup>1</sup> Considered in detail, love was not the end of his requirement, but, considered broadly, it included everything else that could have been required in a heart religion.

Jeremiah and Jesus are both in the prophetic line in their thought upon social abuses. Jeremiah saw an ethical problem in the conditions in Judah, and he attacked it from the standpoint

he held in his attack upon the religious problem. It  
Social  
Attitude lay principally in the social injustice to be found on every side, with the nobles and rulers the chief offenders. "Also in thy skirts is found the blood of the souls of the innocent poor."<sup>2</sup> "Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that doeth justly, that seeketh truth, and I will pardon her. And though they say, As Jehovah liveth; surely they swear falsely."<sup>3</sup> These are strong words. They are but two of Jeremiah's utterances against social injustice. A man of high class himself, he yet dared to risk alienating his peers by fearlessly attacking them. His solution is again that of personal knowledge of Jehovah, for these

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<sup>1</sup> Matt. 4.17.

<sup>2</sup> Jeremiah 2.34.

<sup>3</sup> Jeremiah 5.1-2.





are not his ways. When his ways are known, there will be no such injustice.

Jesus' parables of the unrighteous steward,<sup>1</sup> the unrighteous judge,<sup>2</sup> etc., as well as his woes upon the Pharisees, all show his passion for social righteousness. He stood in line with Jeremiah and the other prophets on this point.

#### Dissimilar Attitudes and Teachings

Though Jeremiah and Jesus were both outspoken against the evils attendant upon riches in their wrong use, in their personal lives they stood at different points. We know that Jeremiah was a man of some substance. He was of a high family with landed Wealth estates at Anathoth, and evidently had substance of his own, for he employed a scribe, apparently devoted his life entirely to his prophetic office and still was not obliged to depend upon the returns of his prophecy for his support--this being one of the bases of his criticisms of the false prophets<sup>3</sup>--and was able to buy the field at Anathoth during the siege of Jerusalem. Apparently he had nothing against possessing substance himself or having others possess it, providing it was not misused.

Jesus, on the other hand, had so little substance that he is reported to have obtained the money to pay the Temple tax by a miracle.<sup>4</sup> When the rich young ruler came to him for the key to eternal

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<sup>1</sup> Matt. 18.28.

<sup>2</sup> Luke. 18.2-8.

<sup>3</sup> Jeremiah 23.9-40.

<sup>4</sup> Matt. 17.27.





life, Jesus told him to go, sell all that he had, and give to the poor, and, when he had gone away in sorrow, added to his disciples, "It is hard for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven."<sup>1</sup> This would not necessarily imply that he thought riches in themselves evil, but he did feel that, because of their hold upon a man, they were a serious hindrance to his spiritual life.

In the chapter on the Biographical Comparison of Jeremiah and Jesus we saw how Jeremiah spent his life in politics, trying to direct the way of the nation. He felt the political powers Political to be a necessary part of the scheme of things, even to Powers the point of envisioning the restoration of political Judah after the exile was over. We have seen, too, how Jesus took no part in political affairs. He said little or nothing of the political "powers that be" of his day. His thought world was far away from politics. That is, he was more concerned with the inner life, right ordering of which would make clean all politics. It may be that his indifference to politics was also due to his view of the future.

To Jeremiah there are two principal elements in the future order that were new to prophecy at the time he spoke. The future One is the idea of a Davidic king. "Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will raise unto David a Branch, and he shall

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<sup>1</sup>Matthew 19.23.

1870, there is no doubt that the world is now in a state of transition, and that the old order of things is passing away. The world is now in a state of transition, and the old order of things is passing away. The world is now in a state of transition, and the old order of things is passing away.

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reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is his name whereby he shall be called: Jehovah our righteousness."<sup>1</sup> Along with the idea of the Davidic King for the future order is the conception of the New Covenant, already quoted, which Knudson<sup>2</sup> calls one of the profoundest and most significant utterances in the Old Testament--a covenant by which the religious responsibility was shifted to the individual instead of to the nation. It must be noted, however, that this future world order was entirely earthly.

Jesus, on the other hand, had an apocalyptic conception of the future order. The end was to be cataclysmic and the Son of God was to come with power.<sup>3</sup> It should be noted here that this was to be the end of the world, and a new world set up. This would probably account for his indifference to political powers mentioned above. Probably the greatest difference between the teaching of Jeremiah and Jesus comes when Jesus teaches immortality.

Immortality was an idea entirely foreign to Jeremiah. It never occurred to him to think that "In my Father's house are many mansions,"<sup>4</sup> or that the good would be rewarded and evil punished in a future judgment. If it had, he would not have felt his sufferings and the burden of pronouncing doom so keenly. This hope must have

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<sup>1</sup>Jeremiah 23.5,6.

<sup>2</sup>Knudson, Beacon Lights of Prophecy, 193.

<sup>3</sup>Matt. 24.3-51; Mk. 13.3-37; Lk. 21.5-36.

<sup>4</sup>John 15. 2.





sustained Jesus in his own trials. It is here probably more than at any other point aside from his freedom from any personal feelings of vengefulness towards his persecutors that Jesus rose above Jeremiah. It is the hope that has lighted the world through dark periods. It is the hope that still lights individuals in time of trial and despair.

This chapter has not pretended to exhaust the category of teachings and attitudes of Jesus and Jeremiah, either similar or dissimilar. It has simply been an attempt to pick out the most essential and use them as a basis of comparison. Much more could be said, both on these and on others that might be mentioned. It has been more of a problem to find points where the attitudes of the two are dissimilar than those where they are alike.



## CHAPTER V

## RELATIVE EVALUATION \*\* SUMMARY

Israel's great contribution to the world was her religious genius. Probably the world has never witnessed such an array of independent religious thinkers as rose in Israel within the limits of the Eighth, Seventh, and Sixth Centuries B.C. With the nations round about sunk in idolatrous nature worship and sex cults, with Israel rapidly absorbing those religions, these prophets raised the monolatrous or henotheistic Yahwism to a powerful monotheism. Amos saw Yahweh as a god of universal righteousness, demanding justice of all nations and punishing Israel for her failure to be worthy of His special knowledge of her.<sup>1</sup> Hosea saw Yahweh as righteous because he was loving, even loving Israel, his wife, through her unfaithfulness. Isaiah saw Yahweh as the Holy One of Israel, righteous and loving because of his great holiness, the God in whom all trust should be put. Micah reached the conception of personal moral requirements: "What doth Jehovah require of thee, but to do justly, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with thy God?"<sup>2</sup> Jeremiah brought the universal conception of Yahweh to the point where he saw Him as the One God who used all nations to accomplish his moral purposes, the God whose love was ultimately for

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<sup>1</sup> Amos 3.2.

<sup>2</sup> Micah 6.8.





the individual and who expected love in return. After Jeremiah, Ezekiel enunciated the doctrine of individual responsibility and, priest-prophet that he was, rebuilt the religion of Judaism upon new foundations, becoming the founder of the synagogue, though Jeremiah had prepared the way for it by his teaching that Yahweh could be worshipped anywhere independently of the Temple. The last of the Exilic line, Deutero-Isaiah, brought forth the great Messianic conception of the Suffering Servant. Of all these, none reached the height of Jeremiah in the thought of personal religion, or the nobility of his New Covenant.

Five centuries later the last of the prophetic line blazed across the sky of Israel. Jesus of Nazareth found the best in his great predecessors and brought it all into a matchless conception of God as a loving Father, in whose love all men are brothers with individual responsibilities not only to God but also to each other. Upon his foundation and around his person a mighty religion burst the bonds of Judaism until it now encompasses the earth.

We have traced the comparison between these two pre-eminent men in these pages, a comparison more true than is sometimes realized. We have not seen either in all the aspects of his great personality, but we have seen enough to know that there is a great kinship between the two.



- Both were born in small towns, country-bred, the one the heir of a long priestly family tradition, the other descended from the great kingly line of Israel. Both were well-trained in religion in their youth, both knew the thoughts of their predecessors and used them with deeper understanding than their fellows possessed. In backgrounds strikingly similar in many respects, these men worked. In Jeremiah's time Judah was as a page boy in the court of nations trying to wear a regal crown, as a moral degenerate wearing the garb of a saint, with robbers masquerading as priests and oppressors sleeping the sleep of the just. She was under the threatening shadow of mighty Babylon when Jeremiah was young; he lived to see her overwhelmed by that shadow, suddenly become a tidal wave. Her religion was a matter of outward display, centering in a glorious temple. In Jesus' time Judaea was torn with the effects of civil war and cruelty on the part of rulers, under the heel of Rome. Again religion was outward, a mass of intricate legal requirements, with a new Temple once more the center of the national religion. Into these backgrounds came these two men with convictions of mission developed in their youth, the one convinced that he was to be a prophet of doom, with later restoration, the other that he was to be the Messiah who should save his people.

Neither married, though each was a man of great tenderness and love. Jeremiah was too sure of the impending destruction to plunge





a family into it; Jesus, too, saw the end coming, but was too filled with his mission to think of a home.

Jeremiah had a long ministry, Jesus a short one. Jeremiah was a political figure, Jesus unknown to politics and unconcerned about such things. Jeremiah's utterances were of the prophetic type, whereas most of Jesus' important discourses were given as those of a teacher to a group of disciples, yet each used much the same methods of parable, symbol, and poetic emphasis to impress his points. Jeremiah had his Baruch, who wrote his prophecies from dictation; Jesus had his disciples who carried his teachings with them until years after his death when some of them wrote them down. Both were rejected in their home cities, but while the prophet of Anathoth spent most of his time in Jerusalem thereafter, Jesus spent his in travelling over all Judaea teaching, preaching, and healing; to the latter only are such miracles attributed, for the prophet did not concern himself with individuals to the same extent or in the same manner. At the end of his ministry, Jesus assumed more of the prophetic style in his prophecies against Jerusalem and the Temple.

Their fearlessness in dealing with their opponents brought each of them into critical situations, climaxed in the Temple scenes in each life. If the prophet stood in the Temple and called it a "Den of Robbers," Jesus echoed his words, and soon found himself not merely in danger for his life but even laying it down.



With these men there was no mincing of words. Jeremiah stood before king and prince, before mob and priest, and scorched them with his prophetic fury. Jesus stood in the midst of the Pharisees and Sadducees and denounced them with a blast quite as withering.

When we become acquainted with Jeremiah, we see him as a study in conflict, whose natural tenderness and sensitiveness were constantly at war with his sense of mission and all it entailed. He was a man with a retiring disposition, forced by his convictions into duties extremely distasteful. This conflict comes out in his prayer, as he communes with God, more directly than any other prophet before him. Jesus does not show conflict to the same degree. He was of much the same tender and sensitive disposition, but his conflicts were rather in the direction of the method of his work, and finally in accepting the final outcome, for his mission as he saw it was far different from that of Jeremiah, in that he was the Messiah come to bring peace and happiness to his people if they would come to him.

Here were two hearts tuned to all the vibrations and overtones of human emotions, plumbing the depths of grief and reaching the heights of joy. They reached their greatest eminence above other men in their realization of love, in which respect Jesus far surpassed Jeremiah, for he never showed a trace of the latter's vengefulness. Love is the dominant note in the lives of these two spirits, lonely in their eminence, finding true companionship only in communion with God.





In personal religious experience they stand out. Each was given over to doing the will of God, having in him a good deal of the mystic. Their conceptions were much alike, with Jesus rising higher in his conception of God as a loving Father and his thought of personal forgiveness for sin, though Jeremiah also preached repentance as the first requisite of religion. The dominant note in the religions of these two men was prayer. The prophet was original in the exercise of prayer, finding a companionship with Yahweh that had not been possible to the others who had not known the means. Jesus carried his prayer life still farther until he was so filled with God in his life that he was continually buoyed up by His presence, until he could pray, "Not my will, but Thine be done." It was in his failure to see his brotherhood with his persecutors that Jeremiah fell farthest short of Jesus.

In their teaching we find many points of comparison. Jeremiah attacked the Law as the perverted instrument of the priests; Jesus tore through the maze of externalities to the great root principles, and as a result was accused of tearing down the Law. The prophet declared ritual, sacrifice, and the symbols of priestcraft unnecessary; Jesus likewise condemned them by his very silence about them, with the exception of his declaration that "I will have mercy and not sacrifice." If the prophet was outspoken in pronouncing the priests deceitful dealers and grasping politicians, Jesus was quite as vigorous in his

The following table shows the results of the

analysis of the data collected during the year 1910. The results are given in the following table, which shows the number of cases of each disease, the number of deaths, and the number of recoveries.

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denunciation of the scribes and Pharisees. Both attacked the usages of the Temple, and both declared the heart more important than the stones of the building; at the same time, both foresaw the destruction of Jerusalem--and both were right. They were alike in their teaching that religion was an affair of the heart, though Jesus carried this farther into love than Jeremiah did. They thought alike on the question of social abuses, denouncing oppression, greed, dishonesty, and all the rest that went with the evils of their respective days.

On the questions of wealth they did not think quite alike. Jeremiah was a man of some wealth himself, and thought it quite proper to retain it. Jesus was poor himself, and advised disposal of riches. Their thought of the future is quite different. Jeremiah thought of a future day when a new political state should be set up with the exiles from all the scattered lands brought together about a new Jerusalem, with a Davidic King to lead them. Jesus, on the other hand, saw an apocalyptic world-end, when the Son of God should come in power and glory to bring judgment upon the world and take the blessed into an eternal life of glory.

Jeremiah stands upon a mountain top untouched by any other of the Old Testament. He is closer to Yahweh than any other of the great fellowship of the prophets. No other thought of God in quite the same terms of love as he did. He raised his voice in warning to his people in vain. Though he saw his hopes for repentance





in his people fading away, he still was able to hope for a glorious future for his nation, though he never expected to see that future himself. So far did he go in that thought that he proclaimed a New Covenant, to be made between Yahweh and Israel, when "They shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know Jehovah; for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, saith Jehovah: for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more."

Many years later Jesus stood upon Everest and proclaimed his message of God's loving Fatherhood, under which all men become brothers and love reigns upon earth. He, too, was obliged to lift his voice in warning, but when his warnings were unheeded he saw even farther than Jeremiah, for he looked straight beyond the grave to a life with God where men should live in eternal peace. At the end of his life, he harked back to the thought of Jeremiah and spoke of the "new covenant in my blood." He did, indeed, come to realize Jeremiah's New Covenant, for he brought "the words of eternal life," the teaching of the way of forgiveness. Jeremiah saw the day when all men, from the least of them unto the greatest, would know Jehovah. Jesus brought God so near to man in his own life that many have known Him in truth. Beside the Cross of Triumph he stands, the one who showed as no other has that

"The soul can split the skies in two  
And let the face of God shine through."



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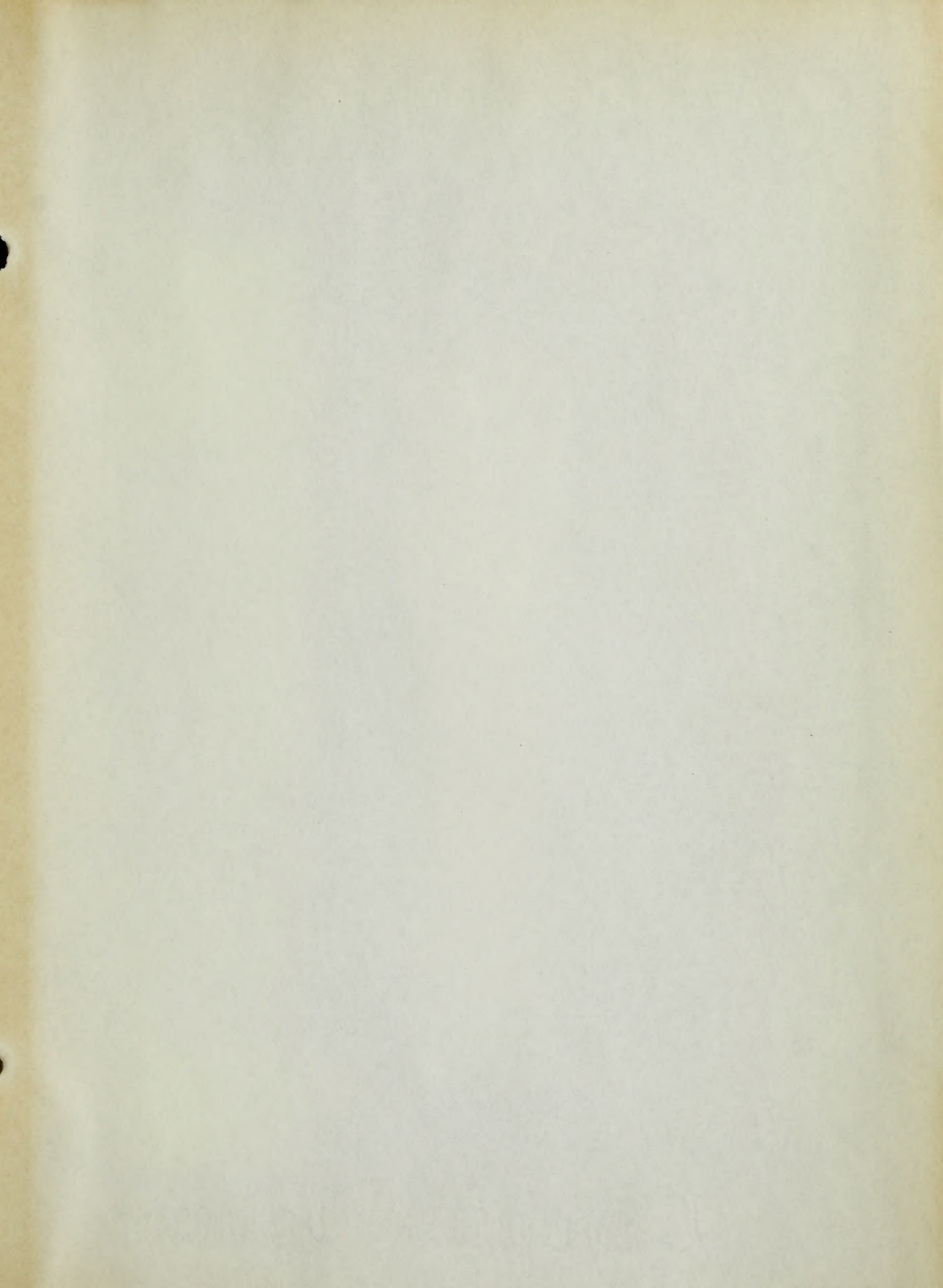
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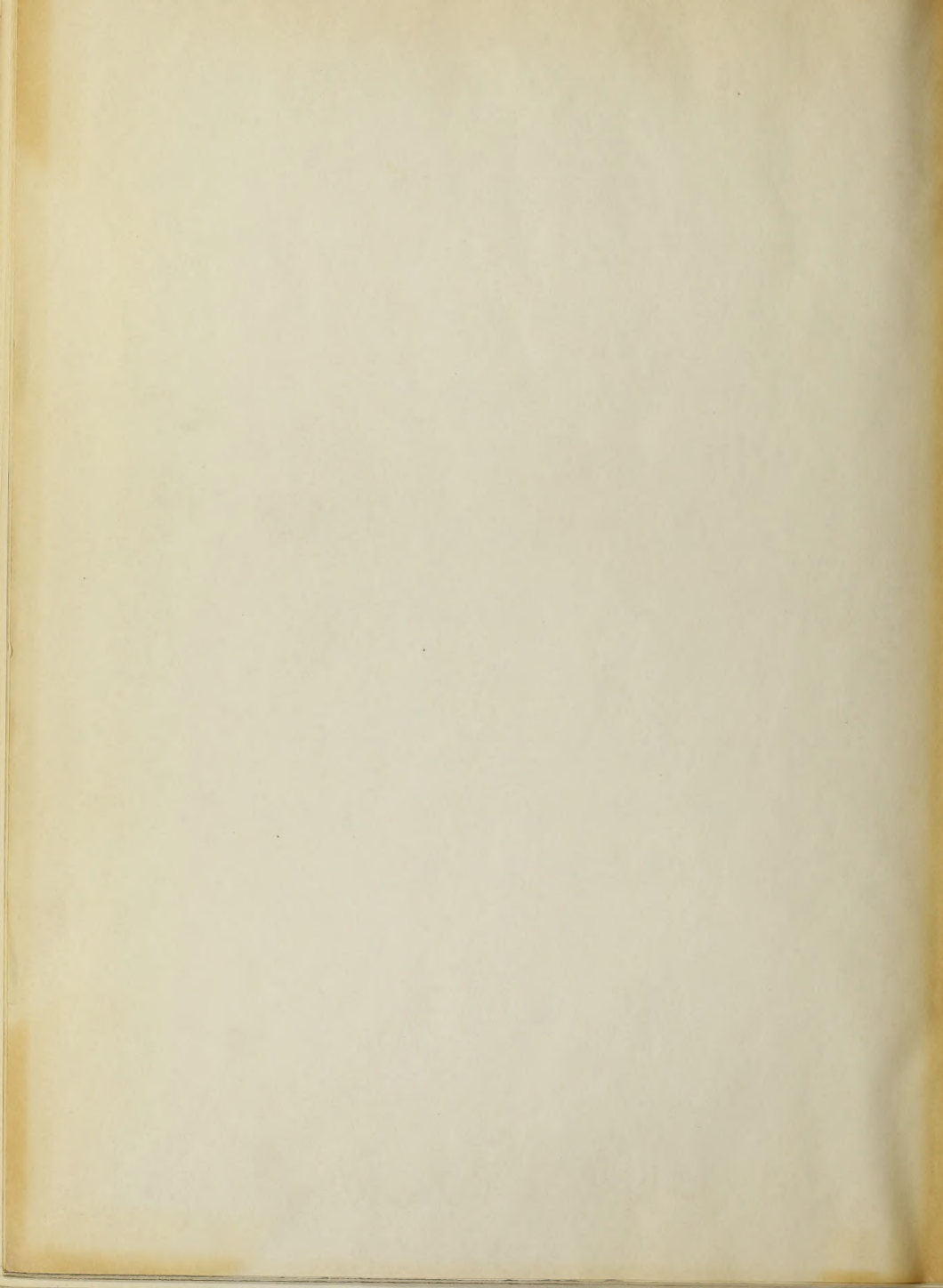
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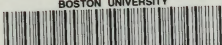








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